

**TOWARD A MODEL FOR PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING
BASED UPON THE WORK OF JAMES LODER**

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**In Partial Fulfillment
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**by
Patrick Morgan Barker**

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Patrick Morgan Barker

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Faculty Committee

Frank Rogers J.
Chairman

William A. Freider

Jack Verheyden

Date April 19, 1993

Alth J. Moore

ABSTRACT

Toward a Model for Pastoral Care and Counseling Based Upon the Work of James Loder

by

Patrick Morgan Barker

In their role as pastoral counselors, parish pastors are expected to help parishioners with issues involving both the psychosocial and the spiritual dimensions of life. In order to meet this expectation, the pastor needs a comprehensive model for counseling. This dissertation provides such a model.

The model presented here is based upon the work of James Loder. It consists of three theoretical pieces. The first is a constructivist epistemology which maintains that knowledge, or meaning, is a subject/object synthesis that is constructed by the creative activity of the imagination. The second piece is a theological anthropology consisting of four distinct, but related, dimensions: the lived world, the self, the Void and the Holy. The third piece is the grammar of transformation, which is the deep structure, or process, by means of which conflicts are resolved regardless of their dimensionality.

The model for the practice of pastoral care and counseling that is developed from these pieces provides pastors with three key ingredients for counseling. First, it provides a conceptual and practical lens for viewing parishioner conflicts in the full range of human being (four

dimensions). Second, it demonstrates the process by which the resolution of conflicts occurs in all dimensions of human being (grammar of transformation). Finally, it provides a method for facilitating movement through this process, thus enabling pastors to counsel effectively within the four dimensions of human being.

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Dedication

To my wife Neva, whose patient love has sustained and healed me in ways that she may never know, and to our children, Kristen, Andrew and Samuel, each one a precious gift and child of God; may their futures be filled with transforming moments of God's grace.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Overview

The Problem

A perennial issue in pastoral care and counseling is that of the relationship between the psychosocial and the spiritual aspects of human existence. Theoretical interest in this relationship is motivated by the practical concern to facilitate healing within both these areas. As often as not the practice of pastoral care and counseling has failed to live up to the best wisdom of its theory in this regard, which is to hold these aspects of human life in creative tension. When it has failed, it is because it has either confused the two, or it has separated them. When they are confused, the spiritual is usually collapsed into the psychosocial, resulting in the neglect of transcendence. When they are separated, the spiritual realm is usually rendered irrelevant to the day to day living of most people.

If pastoral care and counseling is to be faithful to its vocation to provide care to the whole person, it must be able to adequately address issues, and help to resolve conflicts, that arise in people's lives within both of these realms. Pastoral care and counseling must provide a care that maintains the distinction between these realms that does not equal a separation of them.

As difficult as this task may be, it is the parish pastor who must accomplish it. No one among the, so-called,

helping professions is obligated by vocation to care for both the psychosocial and the spiritual needs of the person as is the parish pastor. Such holistic care is not the task of the secular psychotherapist, whose focus is appropriately limited to the psychosocial. Nor is this the task of the pastoral psychotherapist, who likewise specializes in the psychosocial dimension, even though such therapy may be performed with a spiritual "twist," to use Howard Stone's phrase.¹ No, this is the task of the parish pastor.

And yet what parish pastor feels fully adequate to this task? The parish pastor is a generalist, not a specialist, and typically, pastors (and I include myself in this category) refer parishioners to specialists whenever they can, especially for conflicts that lie within the psychosocial realm. Some parishioners should be referred, and conscientious, responsible referrals are a crucial aspect of pastoral care; but, when referral becomes an automatic reaction rather than a studied response to a particular situation, then one is exhibiting one's own sense of inadequacy as much as pastoral care. Furthermore, referrals are not feasible in some parishes because of their isolated location, as in some rural areas, or the people that are cared for are too poor and without adequate insurance to pay the fees of specialists.

¹ Howard W. Stone, The Word of God and Pastoral Care (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 9.

If one is willing to grant that it is the parish pastor's vocation as a pastoral counselor to minister to the whole person, and that most pastors feel generally inadequate to the task, what, then, is one to do? This dissertation attempts to answer that question by proposing a model for pastoral care and counseling that offers promise for equipping pastors for this task. It is not claimed that this model is a cure-all, but that it provides significant help toward enabling pastors to care for parishioner's psychosocial and spiritual needs, and that it moves in the right direction of maintaining a distinction between these two realms of life that does not equal a separation of them.

Regarding the distinction between pastoral care and pastoral counseling, let it be noted that this distinction is recognized, and that the model that is proposed in this paper is appropriate for the more general acts of ministry in the parish that is designated as pastoral care and the more focused, often contractual, mode of that care which is pastoral counseling.

Regarding the meaning of the term "model," H. L. Jernigan has remarked, "In general usage, a model in pastoral care and counseling is a design or pattern for working with persons or, more specifically, a particular theoretical approach to the understanding of persons and the implications of such an approach for the practice of

pastoral care and counseling."² This dissertation presents a model that meets the criteria set forth by Jernigan.

Overview of the Model and Outline of the Chapters

The model is based upon the work of James Loder, who is professor of Christian Education at Princeton Seminary. Loder offers the requisite theoretical approach from which a model for the practice of pastoral care and counseling can be created which can guide pastors in the psychosocial and spiritual dimensions of care. The model consists of three theoretical pieces, each of which contributes to the practical aspects of care in terms of either pastoral diagnosis or treatment.³ The dissertation articulates two diagnostic questions that pastors need to ask which are of practical importance in the use of the model. Furthermore, it includes a method for adapting the theoretical pieces to the practice of pastoral care and counseling, a method which provides the answer to the third question of practical

² H. L. Jernigan, "Models in Psychological and Pastoral Theory," Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling, gen. ed. Rodney Hunter (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 746.

³ See James E. Loder, "Creativity In and Beyond Human Development," in Aesthetic Dimensions of Religious Education, eds. Gloria Durka and Joanmarie Smith (New York: Paulist Press, 1979); "Negation and Transformation," in Toward Moral and Religious Maturity: The First International Conference on Moral and Religious Development, Convenor, Christine Brusselmans (Morristown, N.J.: Silver Burdett, 1980); Religious Pathology and Christian Faith (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966); "Transformation in Christian Education," Religious Education 76, no. 2 (March-April 1981): 204-21; and The Transforming Moment, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: Helmers and Howard, 1989).

importance in the use of the model, the question of treatment.

One of the three theoretical pieces that is developed from Loder that informs this model is a constructivist epistemology. The model is based upon the epistemological position that human beings construct knowledge, or meaning, in interaction with their physical, social and spiritual environments. Knowledge is the synthesis of the various aspects of these environments, objective data as they might be called, and the subjective appropriation of these environmental particulars by the individual in a meaningful form. Knowledge, or meaning, is a subject-object synthesis.

This synthesis is composed by the imagination. The imagination is the creative capacity of the self by means of which various elements within the self's environments are integrated into a meaningful whole.

Furthermore, the creation of meaning by the imagination may constitute, or lead to, the resolution of a conflict. When conflicts are created, or perpetuated, by the particular arrangement of (or by the failure to arrange) the elements in a given situation, then the imaginative rearrangement of these elements into a new whole may be the resolution of the conflict. That is to say, giving new meaning to a conflicted situation may be, or lead to, its resolution. In so far as this is true, then it can be said that the imagination is the source of the resolution to

these conflicts.

Not all conflicts can be resolved this way. In particular, resolution to conflicts which involve the totality of the self cannot be resolved by any capacities of the self, including the imagination. The reason that these conflicts cannot be resolved by the imagination is that the imagination is one aspect, or capacity, of the self that is trapped in, and shaped by, the conflicted condition. Thus, the imagination would reflect, rather than resolve, this condition of the self.

A traditional theological illustration of this dynamic is to be found in the concept of fallenness. One could say that all the acts of the fallen creature, or self, reflect, in one way or another, that fallen condition. Therefore, none of these acts can, of themselves, alter that condition. The self is fundamentally constituted by fallenness, and fallenness is expressed in all of its acts and capacities. This is not to say, however, that none of the activities of the fallen self are without good effect; it is to say that none of them can change the fundamental condition of the self. Resolution of such a conflicted condition must originate from outside the self.

To further illustrate the imprisoned, double-bind nature of the condition that is being considered here, one might refer to the Pauline/Reformation notion of justification by works, to be contrasted, of course, with

justification by grace through faith. One cannot, of oneself, escape from this fundamental orientation toward salvation which is justification by works.⁴ The reason for this is that every attempt to do so is itself an expression of that orientation. To try to escape from this orientation by means of one's own acts or capacities is an instance of that orientation. Consequently, rescue must come from beyond this entrapped self. Rescue comes in the form of the new condition and orientation which is established by grace and received through faith. This dynamic seems to be that which St. Paul expresses in his well-known cry: "Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom. 7:24b-25a, RSV.)

In summary, those conflicts that involve the totality of the person, existential-spiritual conflicts as they might be called, can be resolved only by the initiative and grace of God. God is that power outside the self that can transform it with respect to its existential condition. The medium through which this transforming grace is conveyed is faith, by which is meant reliance upon God in contrast to reliance upon the self. Faith is the self relying upon God for the remedy to the self's conflicted existential condition.

Furthermore, the new condition of faith, and the

⁴ It might be added that such an orientation can be considered to be the result and the expression of the fallen condition of the creature.

presence of the Spirit who inspires it, is represented to consciousness and becomes meaningful to the individual through the activity of the imagination. The Spirit is the environmental given, so to speak, in response to which the imagination constructs a meaningful form by which the Spirit is known. Thus, although the imagination cannot of itself resolve the existential conflicts of the individual, nevertheless, it is an integral factor in the process of their resolution, a process that is ultimately and principally dependent upon God.

This constructivist epistemology and the relationship between faith and the imagination just described are the subject of Chapter 2. That chapter will include a review of the relevant issues in Loder's first book, Religious Pathology and Christian Faith. In this book, Loder discusses the relationship between Soren Kierkegaard and Sigmund Freud in regard to the role of the imagination in coming to know reality, and how the imagination is related to the self's existential condition. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to argue for or against Loder's interpretation of Kierkegaard or Freud. Rather, the intent is to present Loder's ideas in their developmental stage. These ideas are worked out in the dialogue that Loder constructs between Freud and Kierkegaard on the subject of the creation of meaning.

Although this theoretical piece does not lead directly

to a diagnostic or treatment question in the use of this model, its practical importance cannot be overemphasized. In so far as the model is based upon a constructivist presupposition, a method for adapting the model for the practice of pastoral counseling should be based upon a similar presupposition. In general terms, a client-centered approach is based upon a similar presupposition, called the actualizing tendency. However, this approach must be revised to fit those conflicts which cannot be resolved by the innate potential of the person to compose meaningful resolutions. Although Loder's constructivist epistemology will be first discussed in Chapter 2, its implications for pastoral care, alla the client-centered approach and its revisions, will be fully developed in Chapter 6.

The second piece of the model is its theological anthropology. This piece elaborates the distinction and the relationship between the psychosocial and existential-spiritual dimensions, and furthers the contention that some conflicts may be resolved by the creative leaps of the imagination while others are resolved through the initiative and power of God. The theological anthropology that informs this model is composed of four dimensions.

The first dimension is the lived world. Briefly, this refers to the world, or worlds, of meaning that are composed by the self. The lived worlds are those meaning or belief systems in terms of which one gives order to one's

existence. Thus, the lived worlds, although compositions of the self, shape the self and its possibilities, for it is in terms of these lived worlds that the self understands itself and its actions.

For the purposes of this overview, it is enough to point out that the self, which is the second dimension of human being, is both embodied in its lived worlds and transcends them. This dialectic is implicit in what was just said about the way that the self composes, and is composed by, the lived worlds. The self is embodied in the various worlds of meaning by which it is shaped; and yet, there is a transcendent aspect to the self. The self is not solely an extension of its lived worlds. If there were no such aspect, there would be little sense in saying that the self has a hand in composing these lived worlds. Because of this transcendent aspect of the self, it is able to recognize its lived worlds as such and is able to recompose them. Because of this transcendent aspect, the self can construct new meanings, some of which, as has been said, issue in resolutions to conflicts.

There is a further aspect to the self that needs to be stated here. According to Loder (and he is indebted to Kierkegaard throughout his analysis of the self, but particularly here), the self is either grounded or

ungrounded in "the Power that posits the self."⁵ That is, the self is either estranged from or reconciled to God. This existential-spiritual condition of estrangement or reconciliation is fundamental to all else that the self is or does. In particular, the character of the lived worlds that the self composes, and the resolutions to specific conflicts within these worlds, are shaped by the underlying condition of the self. In this, one may hear an echo of the dynamic that was discussed above in terms of the relationship between the imagination and the self's existential condition. This is essentially the same dynamic elaborated in terms of the four dimensions of being.

The absence of one's grounding in God is one aspect of the third dimension of being: the Void. The Void refers to existential threat and negation in its various forms. One might recall Paul Tillich's list, for example: guilt, meaninglessness and death.⁶ The Void is, for example, the absence of meaning to one's existence as a whole.

Although one tries to avoid confronting the Void, it is nevertheless implicitly present in the lived worlds that one composes to keep it out. The defensive, and at times desperate, character of these worlds reflects the implicit presence of the Void. For example, in order to protect

⁵ Soren Kierkegaard, Sickness Unto Death, quoted in Loder The Transforming Moment, 5.

⁶ Paul Tillich, The Courage to Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).

itself from the threat of meaninglessness, the self assumes a defensive posture toward the world. This results in a constricted existence and precludes the self's full engagement in life. The absence that characterizes such a life is one aspect of the Void. The self's ironic double bind is that by protecting itself from the threats of the Void, it falls victim to the Void. In such a state, the self cannot help itself.

The fourth dimension is the help that the self needs; that is, the Holy. The Holy is the power and grace that gives life in the face of, and beyond, the threats of the Void. In the terms of this dissertation, the Holy is God as revealed in Christ and made present through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the power that resolves the conflict that is precipitated by confrontation with the Void.

This piece of the model suggests the first diagnostic question that the pastoral counselor must ask him--or herself in the use of this model: "What is the dimensionality of the situation of the client?" In asking this question, one must bear in mind that the four dimensions of human being are aspects of every situation; nevertheless, it is appropriate to ask if what emerges as a conflict in a given counseling session is primarily of a two or a four dimensional nature.

This is not so much a question of an absolute either/or, but of a figure/ground. That is, the best way to

frame this question is to ask which is emerging as figure and which is receding as ground. Does a two dimensional conflict emerge as the appropriate focus of attention which is seen against the background of the Void and Holy? Or, is it the reverse? Is the conflict primarily an existential one, focusing on the realities of the Void and the Holy to which the two dimensional aspects form the background, giving the existential conflict its particular shape?

Pastoral counselors need to recognize that, since human beings live in four dimensions, all conflicts have four dimensional aspects. Furthermore, as was pointed out above, pastoral counselors are uniquely responsible for assisting the client in dealing with conflicts throughout the four dimensions of his/her being. Nevertheless, in a given counseling situation, the two dimensional aspects of a conflict may represent the most pressing concern in the client's experience. If so, then this concern should be the counselor's point of entry into the client's situation and the initial focus of the counseling conversation. This does not mean that the latent aspects of the conflict, the Void and the Holy, should be forgotten; it does mean that the counselor should accept what the client brings and work with that, even if that means bracketing out, for the time being, aspects of the situation that the counselor believes to be there.

For example, the death of a boy's father would clearly

have four dimensional aspects. As a result of this event, he may, for example, experience conflict associated with the reconfiguration of the family system or the development of a male identity in the absence of a father. These conflicts would have two dimensional aspects in that they would call for resolution and reorganization within the self-lived world dialectic. However, related to the two dimensional aspects of either of these conflicts would be an existential conflict which calls for a four dimensional resolution. For example, such a conflict may emerge as the despair of finding meaning for an existence that appears to be captive to the power of death. This would represent conflict within the third dimension of human being, the Void, and it would require the fourth dimension, the Holy, for a healing resolution. The point here is two fold: (1) all four dimensions are present in a given human situation; and (2) in a given counseling session, the client may present the two or the four dimensional aspects of his/her situation as being of primary concern at the moment.

Pastoral counselors need to be open to the possibility of the client presenting either the two or the four dimensional aspects of his/her situation; and furthermore, the counselor would need to adjust his/her interventions accordingly because the dynamics of each are somewhat different. In the case where the conflict is presented primarily in its two dimensional aspects, the counselor

should intervene in ways that facilitate the creative capacities (imagination) of the human spirit. In the case where the client presents the four dimensional aspects of the conflict, the counselor should intervene in ways that open the individual to the initiative and creative presence of the Holy Spirit.

What is being argued here is that the pastoral counselor is justified in bracketing dimensions of a client's conflict (following the lead of the client) for the sake of treatment. However, the distinction implicit in such bracketing should not lead one into the mistake of assuming a separation among these dimensions, or that the dimensions that are bracketed out (thus constituting the background) have no effect on the resolutions to the conflicts in those dimensions upon which counseling is focused. For example, the client's relation to the Holy will have an effect on the kinds of resolutions that the client's imagination composes for the two dimensional aspects of a conflict. This is true even if the relation to the Holy (and/or Void) is characterized as denial.

To illustrate the relation/distinction dialectic that is being offered here, consider the boy whose father died. To envision the relation among the dimensions, suppose that this boy came to faith in which he experienced a graced relationship with the Holy through which he was able to satisfactorily address the threats of the Void, finding the

power, courage and vision to construct meaning for his life even in the face of death. That experience of the Holy would affect how he would resolve the two dimensional issues involved in developing a male identity. He would tend to develop an identity that reflected the grace of the Holy. For example, it would be unlikely for him to develop a macho male identity, behind which he could hide his personal vulnerabilities, once he had experienced the saving grace of the Holy and had come to rely on that grace. Instead, he would tend to develop a more open, relaxed, caring posture toward life which would be reflected in his sense of himself as a male. On the other hand, a macho male construct would be a likely option if he were related to the Void and the Holy in terms of denial. That denial would be reflected in a closed, defensive posture toward life. A macho maleness, which denies personal vulnerabilities, would correspond to this posture. Although this is a complex dynamic, perhaps one can see how two dimensional constructs are couched in a four dimensional reality, and that the way that one resolves issues in the self-lived world dialectic is related to one's orientation toward the Void and the Holy.

Regarding the distinction among these dimensions, one could say that although one's orientation toward the Void and the Holy will influence one's two dimensional constructs, that influence does not include determining precisely what those constructs will be. There is always

room for the creative capacities of the individual to construct two dimensional realities that reflect the four dimensional reality of his/her life. Moreover, it needs to be emphasized that the experience of faith in the grace of the Holy, for example, does not, of itself, resolve the issue of constructing a male identity. Nor, on the other hand, does the construction of a male identity, of itself, resolve the issue of finding meaning to an existence that is surrounded by death. It should be clear that although these dimensions and their particular conflicts are related, they are also distinct.

A final dynamic that is possible in a given instance, that must be made explicit, is that in which an adequate two dimensional resolution cannot be composed, or maintained, prior to a corresponding four dimensional one. It could be that this boy would never be able to develop a personally authentic identity until his ego was sufficiently freed from its defensive posture toward life by means of a graced experience of the Holy. Another instance of this dynamic would be an alcoholic who could not get his/her two dimensional life on track, or keep it there, until he/she learned to depend upon his/her "higher power."

In summary, a graced encounter with the Holy will resolve conflicts involving the dimension of the Void, and will influence resolution to conflicts within the self-lived world dialectic, but such an encounter will not, of

itself, be the resolution to the conflicts in these latter dimensions. Also, two dimensional resolutions will not, of themselves, be the resolution to conflicts within the dimension of the Void. The question that remains is will two dimensional resolutions in any way influence resolution of these latter conflicts.

Loder would answer by saying that two dimensional experiences can function as analogues, or prototypes, for four dimensional ones.⁷ This is a common enough position, as when, for example, a human father's love may be said to be analogous to the divine love of the heavenly Father. Furthermore, Loder argues that the process, or grammar, of transformation (see below) in two dimensions prepares one for transformation in four dimensions because the process in each case is the same. So, both in terms of content analogues (prototype) and the process of transformation, Loder would say that two dimensional experiences can be preparatory for four dimensional experiences.

What Loder probably would not say is that a resolution to a two dimensional conflict that is prototypical of an experience of the Holy is itself an experience of the Holy. For Loder, the experience of the Holy seems to be reserved for those events of grace which occur on the far side of confrontation with the Void and which radically reorient the self. While rightly emphasizing the critical and distinct

⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, esp. 176-80.

nature of such an experience of the Holy, this position seems to unnecessarily restrict the presence and action of the Holy. Could not the Holy be experienced in those prototypical two dimensional events which occur on the near side of confrontation with the Void and prior to the radical reorientation of the self? The position taken in this dissertation is that it could be.

A full discussion of Loder's theological anthropology, a critique of it in terms of this restrictive relationship among the dimensions of human being and the implications of both for pastoral care and counseling is presented in chapter three.

The third piece of the model is the grammar of transformation. Simply put, transformation is the creation of new meaning. Transformation may involve the particular two dimensional aspects of a conflict and/or the four dimensional aspects of it. In either case, Loder's position is that transformation follows an identical process or pattern. The process by which new meaning is created is the grammar of transformation. It is called a grammar because it is the deep structure of the language of transformation, so to speak, regardless of the content or the dimension involved in the transformation.

This comprehensiveness of the grammar is particularly important for the purposes of pastoral counseling. Pastoral counseling attempts to facilitate the resolution of

conflicts within two and four dimensions of being. Since the grammar of transformation is the process by which many of these conflicts are resolved, it follows that facilitating this process is one way that pastoral counseling can fulfill its vocation.

Thus, the focus of pastoral counseling, as it is envisioned here, is on this process. Of course, content is not ignored. Process and the content both need to be attended to by the counselor. However, this model emphasizes the process. Again, the reason for this is that the process is fundamental to the resolution of conflicts regardless of their particular content or dimensionality. By facilitating the client's process of transformation, the counselor may be of significant help even though his or her personal knowledge of the content area that is concerning the client may be significantly limited. For example, the counselor may have little knowledge of the dynamics of human development, but by knowing that human development follows the pattern laid out in the grammar, and by recognizing where the client is in the grammar, he or she may facilitate the course of the client's development simply by facilitating the client's movement through the grammar. This should not be taken to mean that knowledge of the course of human development, or of any of the other content areas that may arise in counseling, is superfluous. It is to say that a counseling pastor may be of significant help

to his or her parishioners without it.

Furthermore, good therapy is always attentive to the client's process, regardless of the therapist's personal knowledge of the dynamics of the particular content of the client's complaint. Moreover, no one, not even a practicing psychotherapist, can be fully knowledgeable of all the problem areas that may arise in counseling. It seems, then, that an emphasis on process is justifiable for counseling in general, and for counseling by pastors in particular, in so far as counseling is only one of the pastor's tasks. Since the pastor is a generalist, he or she would be even less likely to be knowledgeable of the dynamics of various problem areas than would be a counseling specialist.

To be effective in the use of the model, the counseling pastor must know the characteristics of the various phases, or steps, of the grammar and be able to recognize them in his or her client. Since each step in the grammar has a character of its own, to be helpful in facilitating the client's movement through it, the counselor must adjust his or her interventions to fit the step of the grammar that is occupying the client. This suggests the second diagnostic question that the counselor needs to ask him or herself: "Where in the grammar is the client?" Locating the client's position within the grammar is crucial in the use of this model because it will determine the range of interventions that are appropriate.

The meaning of transformation and the characteristics of the steps of the grammar of transformation is the subject of the fourth chapter. Also included in this chapter is a discussion of the grammar of transformation considered as a whole.

The fifth chapter is a closer look at the grammar of transformation as it operates in two and four dimensions. Case studies are presented to illustrate movement through the grammar in two and four dimensions.

The final chapter discusses the way that a pastoral counselor might facilitate movement through the grammar. As was mentioned above, the method that is fundamental for the facilitation of movement through the grammar is a client-centered one. The writer has selected this method for two principal reasons. First, as was also mentioned above, it is based upon a presupposition that is similar to, if not identical with, the one upon which the grammar is based; namely, the individual's creative capacity to compose and recompose meaning. In the client-centered literature, this capacity is generally referred to as the growth hypothesis, or the actualizing tendency, which is the innate tendency of the person to actualize his or her potentials in the direction of richer and more adequate compositions of meaning for both self and world. The client-centered method of counseling is based upon the obvious notion that this tendency is more likely to be actualized when the right

conditions are present than when they are not. It aims, therefore, at establishing these conditions.

The character of these conditions make a client-centered method particularly useful for pastors. This is the second reason for choosing this approach. These conditions are not established by means of therapeutic techniques that require extensive training to be mastered; rather, they are established by means of counselor attitudes. Furthermore, these attitudes are highly compatible with those that Christians are encouraged to have toward one another. These attitudes are: unconditional positive regard, genuineness and empathic understanding. The attitude of unconditional positive regard suggests grace and love; that of counselor genuineness, or congruence, suggests honesty, integrity, perhaps righteousness; and empathic understanding suggests self-emptying, compassion and truth. In other words, these attitudes reflect those that are already important aspects of a Christian, not to mention pastoral, character.

In advocating a client-centered approach, counselor responses are not intended to be restricted to reflective listening. While client-centered attitudes and responses are basic, other responses may be appropriate. Their appropriateness would be determined by two general criteria. First, all responses must be aimed at facilitating the experiencing of the client, since the client's experiencing

and his or her movement through the grammar is the primary concern of counseling that is based upon this model.

Second, counselor responses must correspond to the particular step of the grammar that is occupying the client and to the dimensionality of his or her situation. The dimensionality of a situation refers, of course, to the four dimensions of human being that have been discussed. The five steps of the process of transformation are: (1) conflict, (2) interlude for scanning, (3) insight (resolution), (4) release and transcendence, and (5) interpretation.

Adjusting interventions according to the dimensionality and the particular step in the grammar is not as complicated as it may sound. The interventions that are recommended for a given step in the grammar are types of interventions, rather than specific techniques. Furthermore, these types of responses are such that they can direct interventions in situations that are either two or four dimensional. For example, one type of counselor response is an "understanding" response, one in which the counselor attempts to understand the feelings, thoughts, worldview, etc. of the client. Such a response is appropriate throughout the steps of the grammar, but is particularly helpful in the first step, in which the client is trying to articulate the conflict that he or she is experiencing. Such a response is appropriate whether the conflict is

primarily a two or a four dimensional one. In terms of the previous example of the death of a boy's father, an understanding response in step one with a two dimensional focus might be, "You certainly seem to miss your father." With a four dimensional focus, an understanding response might be, "The ultimacy and pervasiveness of death makes you wonder if anything is worth it."⁸ As one can see, the type of response in both instances is an understanding one, but it is adjusted to fit the dimensionality of the conflict that is the focus of attention at the moment.

The final question, then, that the counselor should ask when using this model concerns treatment rather than diagnosis, and it is: "How am I to facilitate movement through the grammar?" The answer to this question is determined by all of the theoretical pieces of the model and the answers to the previous diagnostic questions. First, the constructivist epistemology suggests the general client-centered approach. Second, the four dimensions of being and the question that it implies for practice of pastoral counseling suggests that counselor interventions need to be indexed to the dimensionality of the client's situation. Third, the grammar of transformation and the question that it implies for the practice of pastoral counseling suggest that counselor interventions need to

⁸ Of course, the precise language that is used would depend upon the age, education, etc. of the client.

correspond to the step of the grammar that is occupying the client.

In summary, the theoretical base is composed of three central ideas: a constructivist epistemology, a theological anthropology of four dimensions, and the grammar of transformation. From these pieces, two diagnostic questions emerge: "What is the dimensionality of the client's situation?" and "Where is the client in the grammar of transformation?" The method for adapting these theoretical pieces to the practice of pastoral counseling is based upon all of them and is the answer to the treatment question, "How can I, as a pastoral counselor, facilitate movement through the grammar of transformation in this particular situation?"

Two points should be made explicit concerning the audience that this dissertation is addressing. It is primarily written for pastors who counsel their parishioners. However, it may be of use to those counselors who work in pastoral counseling centers, and who are interested in the spiritual aspects of their client's situations. Consequently, the person being counseled will be referred to both as parishioner and as client. Secondly, the dissertation is written from a traditional trinitarian perspective. That is, the Holy is understood in terms of God in Christ present in the Holy Spirit. Those readers who adhere to a different understanding of the Holy will have to

make the necessary translations into the language of their own traditions or theologies.

Finally, the method employed in the writing of this dissertation is primarily a review of the pertinent literature, chiefly of course, that of Loder. While Loder's position is critiqued in some places (e.g., his restrictive view of the action of the Holy in human life), the review of his work is predominately favorable. Some important aspects of the model that is constructed from Loder's work are illustrated by case studies of persons with whom I have worked, and from whom I have obtained permission for use in this dissertation. These case studies are not verbatums, but are condensations of actual pastoral conversations.

However, the method employed is not simply review of Loder. I have attempted to synthesize the work of various other authors with that of Loder in an effort to create a practical model for pastoral care and counseling which can be useful to pastors (and others) in their vocation to care for the whole person.

In conclusion, the dissertation contributes to the theory and practice of pastoral care and counseling by making Loder's work accessible to pastors in terms of a model for care and counseling, and in devising a method for the use of this model in the actual pastoral conversations of pastors with their parishioners.

CHAPTER 2

Constructivist Epistemology

Imagination and Faith

As was said in the preceding chapter, the first theoretical piece of the model is its constructivist epistemology. Knowledge is constructed, in part, by an active participant rather than being imposed, or imprinted upon, a passive observer. However, knowledge is only in part constructed by an active participant, for it is also grounded in the given. Knowledge is not created ex nihilo. The givenness of one's environment (physical, social and spiritual) represents the objective pole, while the construction of it into a meaningful whole, or form, represents the subjective pole. Knowledge, then, is a subject/object synthesis.¹

According to Loder, this synthesis is composed by the imagination.² Although Loder does not define the imagination precisely, or as such, his view is that the imagination is the synthesizing activity of the self. It is the energy of the self which integrates the various elements of a given situation into a meaningful relationship. Such a synthesis is a false, or an imaginary (rather than imaginative) one to the extent that the nature of the givens

¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 32.

² Loder, Transforming Moment, 26-33.

of the situation are denied or distorted.³

Concerning the importance of the imagination in the construction of knowledge, Loder contends that any theory of knowledge that fails to "recognize and accept its primary dependency on some leap of the imagination, some insight, some intuition or vision is guilty of intellectual dissimulation."⁴ To get a fuller understanding of Loder's view of the imagination and its role in the construction of knowledge, or meaning, it will be helpful to review some of the relevant ideas in his first volume, Religious Pathology and Christian Faith.

In Religious Pathology and Christian Faith, Loder compares the thought of Sigmund Freud and Soren Kierkegaard in regard to the emergence of "reality consciousness." What Loder is concerned with here is the tracing of the movement of consciousness in the construction of beliefs about reality; or, how beliefs about reality form in consciousness.

In this volume, Loder makes the following significant statement:

A "relationship" [as between subject and object] may be defined as a situation that depends upon two or more entities, agencies, or functions, say A and B, concerning which the following three statements are true: (1) A and B would both exist even if the relationship between them were not present; (2) the relationship could not exist

³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 24, 38.

⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 26.

without A and B; and (3) the relationship itself is₅ of a different class of phenomena from A and B.

Loder intends A and B to represent the "functioning of consciousness" (subjective) and the "focus or subject matter of consciousness" (objective).⁶ His concern is about their relationship, which is to say that he is concerned about how we come to know something. How does consciousness function vis-a-vis an object, or focus, so as to create knowledge of that object? Knowledge is here understood to be the relationship between the functioning of consciousness and the focus of consciousness, or as was said above, a synthesis of the objective and subjective. This relationship, this synthesis of objective and subjective, is "the intrapsychic image."⁷ It is through the image, which is constructed by internal, or subjective, processes in response to objective data, that one attains knowledge of reality. Knowledge is constructed by the connecting leaps of the imagination.

Loder quotes Freud's remarks on perception in this regard.

Perception may be said to correspond to a nuclear object plus a motor image. While one is perceiving S (an object in the external world), one copies the movements oneself, that is to say, one innervates one's own motor image (which has

⁵ Loder, Religious Pathology, 141.

⁶ Loder, Religious Pathology, 129.

⁷ Loder, Religious Pathology, 142.

been aroused to coincide with the perception) so strongly that one actually performs the movement. Thus one can speak of perception as having an "imitative value." Or the perception may arouse its memory-image of a sensation of pain of one's own so that he feels the corresponding unpleasure and repeats the appropriate defensive movements. Here we have the "sympathetic value" of a perception.⁸

Loder interprets Freud here by saying, "It can then be seen that the image is the relationship between functioning [of consciousness] and its object. An image is aroused by the combined activity of the body's memory and stimuli from a nuclear object."⁹ Here one can see how Loder can speak of knowledge as being a synthesis of subject and object.

One can also distinguish two parts to the knowing event: (1) the experience of something (object), and (2) as something (subjective image). For example, noticing a white, styrofoam, cylindrically shaped object that is open at the wider end and closed at the narrower end is the experience of something. That something may be variously experienced as being a receptacle for my coffee or pencils, or as the answer to my question of what to do for party hats for my son's birthday party, having realized at the last minute that I had forgotten to get them at the store (holes

⁸ Sigmund Freud, "The Project for a Scientific Psychology," The Origins of Psychoanalysis, Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts and Notes: 1887-1902, eds. Marie Bonaparte, et al., trans. Eric Mosbacher and James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 1954), 395 as quoted in Loder, Religious Pathology, 146.

⁹ Loder, Religious Pathology, 146.

punched in opposite sides of the open end of the cup and cut rubber bands tied in these holes make a party hat for kids, which, by the way, they can decorate themselves). Thus, the "cup" is the objective datum which may be experienced as a potential receptacle for coffee or pencils, or as a potential hat, depending upon the subjective response to it. In Freud's language, the nuclear object (the cup), provokes a subjective response in the form of a motor image which is the relationship between subjective and objective, by which the experience of the object is experienced as something to this particular subject with his or her unique set of memories, interests, etc.

Loder goes on to discuss Freud's understanding of hypnagogic images (which are dream-like images occurring in the state of drowsiness immediately preceding sleep), as Freud presented it in The Interpretation of Dreams.¹⁰ Here Freud shows his indebtedness to Herbert Silberer. This position enlarges the range of the image for this discussion.

Herbert Silberer has described a good method of directly observing the transformation of thoughts into images which occurs in dream-formation, and has thus made it possible to study in isolation this one factor of dream-work. [He] has caught the transformation of thoughts into images in flagranti, by forcing himself to accomplish intellectual work while in a state of fatigue and somnolence. The elaborated thought vanished, and in its place there appeared a vision which proved

¹⁰ Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, 3rd ed., trans. A. A. Brill (New York: Macmillan, 1923).

to be a substitute for--usually abstract--thoughts. In these experiments it so happened that the emerging image, which may be regarded as a dream-element, represented something other than the thoughts which were waiting for elaboration: namely, the exhaustion itself, the difficulty or distress involved in this work; that is, the subjective state and the manner of functioning of the person exerting himself rather than the object of his exertions. Silberer called this case, which in him occurred quite often, the "functional phenomenon," in contradistinction to the "material phenomenon" which he expected.¹¹

It is important to note that the subjective state, the exhaustion, is presented by the image. This underlying psychosomatic condition of the subject is known through the image just as would be the case with external stimuli. This idea will be expanded later when it will be argued that the existential condition as well as the psychosomatic condition may be articulated to consciousness via an image.

The hypnagogic image may represent more than simply the condition as it is or the cognitive content as it is. The creative unconscious may produce an image which contains the essence of a resolution to a problem which was previously occupying the conscious mind. Loder quotes Silberer in this regard:

In a state of drowsiness I contemplate an abstract topic such as the nature of transsubjectively (for all people) valid judgements. A struggle between active thinking and drowsiness sets in. The latter becomes strong enough to disrupt normal thinking and to allow--in the twilight-state so produced--the appearance of an autosymbolic phenomenon. The content of my thought presents

¹¹ Freud, Interpretation of Dreams, 363-64, as quoted in Loder, Religious Pathology, 180.

itself to me immediately in the form of a perceptual (for an instant apparently real) picture: I see a big circle (or) transparent sphere) in the air with people around it whose heads reach into the circle. This symbol expresses practically everything that I was thinking of. The transsubjective value is valid for all people without exception: the circle includes all heads.¹²

One can see that an image can present a solution to a problem that the conscious mind had been considering. Loder comments on this passage: "The creative act performed in the image's representation of the material phenomenon lies in the integrative fusion of diverse abstractions; the image presented in a single moment an extended train of thought."¹³ Furthermore, Loder adds, "The point is that the image has now added insight by virtue of its particular organization of things and has made a solution possible where it was not possible before."¹⁴

The importance of these comments cannot be overemphasized. They contain crucial insights into what will be developed into a theory of transformation via the imagination. The point here is that the image may represent

¹² Herbert Silberer, "Report on a Method of Eliciting and Observing Certain Symbolic Hallucination-Phenomena," ["Bericht ueber eine Methode, gewisse symbolische Halluzinations-Erscheinungen hervorzurufen und zu beobachten," Jhb. Psa. Psychopath. Forsch 1 (1909): 513-25] trans. by David Rapaport in Organization and Pathology of Thought; Selected Sources (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), 198, as quoted in Loder, Religious Pathology, 181.

¹³ Loder, Religious Pathology, 184.

¹⁴ Loder, Religious Pathology, 184.

not just one's condition or the elements of a conflict in which one is involved, but also a new arrangement of the conflicted elements, a new relationship among them which may be said to constitute a resolution to the conflict and the creation of new knowledge, or meaning.

From this brief discussion of Freud one can see how knowledge, or meaning, can be understood to be mediated through an image. It is through the image that a nuclear object is known to a given subject. Furthermore, it is through the image that the psychosomatic condition is conveyed to consciousness. Finally, in a more creative mode, the image constructs and conveys new knowledge: the elements of a given conflict before consciousness are presented in a novel organization such that the conflict is essentially resolved through the creation of new knowledge or meaning.

Having briefly reviewed Loder's understanding of Freud regarding the role of the image in creating meaning and in resolving of conflicts, the discussion will now turn to Loder's understanding of Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard contributes to the discussion by introducing the existential dimension and revealing the limits of the imagination in resolving conflicts, to wit: the imagination cannot, of itself, alter the existential condition of the individual.

Loder says that for Kierkegaard, "The underlying medium and dynamic means for both the acquisition and assertion of

objective knowledge is the imagination."¹⁵ Loder points out that "objective knowledge" here does not mean just the things in the world, but the "'objective' knowable 'I'" as well.¹⁶ Loder notes that for Kierkegaard the "imagination is a broad conception which supplies the necessary forms and representations for all perception, cognition and reflection as well as fantasy and poetic ideation."¹⁷

It is through the imagination that an objective world is conceived and known by a subject. Prior to the imaginative constructions of reality, there is only the immediacy of direct sense impressions. At that point, there is no distinction between subject and object. It is through the movements of the imagination that relationships among sense data are created and one develops concepts through which one knows the world and objects in it, which, in turn, gives rise to the subject. A distinction emerges in consciousness between subject and object. In this movement, one gains distance from the immediacy of sense impressions, thereby creating objects of reflection (thought) out of them, and so, creating simultaneously a reflecting subject. As Loder says,

Conceptualization, then, is the subjective action upon the sense data enabling one to distinguish objects in general, specific objects, and parts of

¹⁵ Loder, Religious Pathology, 143.

¹⁶ Loder, Religious Pathology, 144.

¹⁷ Loder, Religious Pathology, 144.

objects in their relations to the whole. The dialectic here is that in the subjective activity of forming perceptual data, consciousness had exercised its capacity to move into a relationship within and by itself, thereby gaining a conception.¹⁸

There are two movements here that Loder notes. First, there is the "simple act of perception" in which "consciousness is not discernibly divided within itself."¹⁹ Secondly, there is "the creation of a concept--and by implication the creation of a conscious difference between subject and object."²⁰ Thus, consciousness enters into relationship with itself "in which one's awareness is by implication separable from the content of awareness, [which] is the psychic basis for the subject-object polarities, and in turn is the structural basis for the dialectical process of conception and reflection."²¹

One can see, then, that the imagination is instrumental in creating the subject-object distinction. This imaginative movement is, likewise, the "necessary basis for reason,"²² since out of it conceptuality arises.

Reason proves to be both a bane and a blessing. On the one hand, it enables one to give meaningful shape to the

¹⁸ Loder, Religious Pathology, 30-31.

¹⁹ Loder, Religious Pathology, 31.

²⁰ Loder, Religious Pathology, 31.

²¹ Loder, Religious Pathology, 31.

²² Loder, Religious Pathology, 47.

variety of internal and external stimuli. On the other hand, reason comes to dominate consciousness, since, as Loder says, its essence is to "subdue whatever phenomena may threaten its cognitive nature and to bring that phenomena into the structure of cognition as an object of knowledge."²³

The consequence of the dominance of reason is the objectifying of existence. Existence is known and experienced primarily through the distancing movement of reflection or conceptuality. This is essentially a distortion of existence, because existence, or being, cannot be contained in thought. The subject-object synthesis has become the subject-object split, with the objective being the primary factor in determining the character of existence. Such a dynamic occurs in religion, for example, when human beings view God primarily as an object which can be pondered at a distance by a disinterested observer. Existential theologians who are influenced by Kierkegaard (Rudolf Bultmann, for example) would contend that whatever it is that these observers are observing, it is not God. God can only be known in an existentially relevant encounter, one in which the individual is addressed in his/her subjectivity by another subject, namely God.

Reason, as the primary architect of consciousness, the concomitant subject-object dichotomy and the objectifying of

²³ Loder, Religious Pathology, 95.

existence characterize what Loder, following Kierkegaard, calls the "aesthetic existence."²⁴ This condition is a pervasive structure for knowing and being. It is reflected in all the faculties of the self, including the imagination. The imagination serves this condition in that all the possibilities that the imagination procures are immediately subject to this structure. The imagination does not have the power to change this condition.

This pervasive structure is ultimately self-destructive. Loder says,

The self-destructive aspect of the dichotomy is that because of its control over the individual he is always partially unreal in that he is not totally in his existence. His experience is always divided by this dichotomy. Once he perceives himself as unreal in this sense, then the reality of the dichotomy, i.e., its necessary basis for reason, becomes unbearable.²⁵

The individual is caught in a double bind. He/she cannot abandon reason altogether, for that would mean a regression into the chaos of unstructured sense impression. But, neither can he/she live with reason as the primary structuring agent of consciousness because that would mean that he/she is always unreal in the way that Loder has just described. This condition is the source of the individual's despair.

This condition constitutes the existential conflict of

²⁴ Loder, Religious Pathology, 35-36.

²⁵ Loder, Religious Pathology, 47.

the individual. It is a struggle that pervades one's entire existence as such, rather than a particular aspect of it. The aesthetic condition is one from which the individual cannot escape through his or her own efforts. Every such effort becomes subject to the same condition. Loder's analysis of Kierkegaard's spheres of existence exemplifies this dynamic.

The movement through Kierkegaard's spheres of existence does not alter this fundamental structure for knowing and being, it only deepens one's awareness of the nature of it and, consequently, one's despair in it. Writing of the Ethical Sphere, Loder says,

The Ethical stage of existence comes into being when one becomes despairingly--not contentedly--conscious of his bondage to this particular pattern of being in the world, and attempts to remake himself after the image of what he ought to be. This is the ethical thing to do, but the dichotomy persists, making every effort into an object; and thereby, surreptitiously, Aesthetic mindedness is restored, now flying ethical colors.²⁶

Then, regarding the stage of Religious A, Loder writes,

[One] withdraws utterly from the external world, and flings himself inward toward the "eternal." But the attempt to break with all objectivity fails because the internal vision of the eternal is also an object for consciousness. Thus, the dichotomy restores itself even in religiousness. The kernel of religious pathology is the persistence of the dichotomy against one's despair both of and in it.²⁷

²⁶ Loder, Religious Pathology, 47.

²⁷ Loder, Religious Pathology, 47.

Within the different spheres, the imagination presents consciousness with varying images. The imagination can present various ethical images of the self, but it cannot prevent consciousness from succumbing to the subject-object split in regard to these images. Likewise for Religion A, the internal images of the eternal become subject to this same dichotomy. The imagination may create changes within the underlying condition, but not of it.

The condition can only be transformed from outside itself. This is the event of grace, in which the new condition of faith is bestowed in and through the image of the God-Human. This is the stage of Paradoxical Religiousness, or Religion B. It is called paradoxical because in Christ there exists the union of that which reason insists cannot be united: infinite and finite, God and human being.

In this stage, reason has been presented with the image of the God-Human through the Christian proclamation, and reason cannot comprehend it. Reason judges the notion of the union of the infinite and the finite to be absurd. Reason cannot capture the God-Human as an object of reflection. Nevertheless, in spite of reason's inability to assimilate this proclamation to its own terms, it is unable to simply leave it alone. As Kierkegaard says it, reason wills its own downfall. "There is something," says Kierkegaard, "which makes it impossible to desist from

looking [at the paradox of the image of the God-Human]."²⁸

The appropriation of the paradox cannot occur through the exercise of reason alone. It occurs as a gift, as grace. The paradox is "bestowed" in a new immediacy, an "immediacy after refection." This new immediacy, in which the paradox of the God-Human is bestowed, is not a return to the immediacy of unreflected sense data. This is, instead, an immediacy of conviction, "conviction beyond reason," as Loder calls it.²⁹ In this moment of faith, one is convinced that the proclamation is true even though one does not understand how (within the dictates of reason) it is. The paradox is bestowed at a psychic depth beyond the objectifying split in consciousness, a depth in which the subject-object synthesis of knowledge is restored by means of the convicting image. In this moment of the bestowal of the paradox through the convicting image, a new agency and condition begins to structure consciousness: the "passion of faith." Reason is now a "function rather than the framer of consciousness."³⁰

In paradoxical Religiousness, the Unknown [God] responds to reason by bestowing itself on the total awareness in the Absolute Paradox of the God-Man. In this bestowal, reason is not merely

²⁸ Soren Kierkegaard, Training in Christianity, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 124ff, as quoted by Loder, Religious Pathology, 173-74.

²⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 9.

³⁰ Loder, Religious Pathology, 100.

negated, but transformed into a function subsidiary to total awareness.³¹

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It is when reason and the Paradox encounter each other happily, when the pride of reason is set aside, that the paradox bestows itself. This bestowal is received with the passion Kierkegaard calls faith.³²

It is through this demotion of reason in the bestowal of the paradox that the existential conflict of aesthetic mindedness is overcome. The individual's whole existence is transformed.

His [Christ's] nature cannot be objectified, but he can enter into a relationship with an individual by becoming the relationship between the individual and the eternal in psychic fact. His nature cannot be understood, but in relationship to it an individual existing in despair may have his existence transformed.³³

The bestowal of the paradox means reconciliation within the self, and with the ground of being. The aesthetic condition was one of psychic division and of separation of the self from the ground of its being. Such was the legacy of the objectification of existence. This separation is overcome in the bestowal of the God-Human. Through the passion of faith, expressed in and occasioned by, the convicting image, the self is made whole and grounded in the "Power that posited it." In this moment of faith, reason is not destroyed, but its tyranny over consciousness is ended.

³¹ Loder, Religious Pathology, 96.

³² Loder, Religious Pathology, 105.

³³ Loder, Religious Pathology, 101.

A more careful consideration of how this bestowal happens with respect to the imagination needs to be presented. It was said that the God-Human is bestowed in an image. This needs to be considered in more detail. This will involve the important dialectic that pertains between the imagination and the existential condition of the individual.

It was said that the condition of faith is bestowed in, and given through, the image of the God-Human, and that this same condition, or passion, of faith is expressed in the image. The question arises, "Which comes first, the condition of faith or the image through which it is bestowed and through which it is expressed?" With such a question apparently in mind, Loder makes the following statement, "The relationship between the imagination and the condition (despair or passion [faith]) is not able to be perfectly specified with respect to prius and secundus."³⁴ To help understand this, a consideration must be given to how Loder understands the movement from despair to faith in Kierkegaard. He quotes Kierkegaard in this regard:

There is something which makes it impossible to desist from looking [at the paradox of the God-Human] and lo! while one looks, one sees in a mirror, one gets to see oneself, or He, the sign of contradiction [Christ as the God-Human] sees into the depths of one's heart while one is gazing into the contradiction. A contradiction placed directly in front of a man--if only one can get

³⁴ Loder, Religious Pathology, 167.

him to look at it--in a mirror; while he is judging, what dwells within him is revealed.³⁵

Although this particular quotation is not especially enlightening by itself, Loder's comment about it is:

But the God-Man reveals the thoughts of the heart, and he reveals them as if in a mirror. That is, the dichotomy of the individual within and concerning himself is revealed to the individual, but in a mirror image the situation is completely reversed; the unsolvable conflict is resolved.³⁶

In other words, the existential conflict that the individual is experiencing is recognized in Christ through the creative, synthesizing activity of the imagination, in response to the proclamation of the church. But, this conflict is recognized not simply as conflicted, so to speak, but as resolved. The reconciliation between the infinite and the finite, between God and human being, which was the essence of the conflict for the individual in aesthetic despair, is seen as being effected in the God-Human. This is the same dynamic that will be encountered below regarding the cross and resurrection of Jesus, where the disciple identifies with Christ in Christ's brokenness on the cross (mirroring the brokenness of sin in the disciple), and with the Risen Christ as the overcoming of the disciple's sin and the granting of new life.

One can see, then, that the new condition of faith is

³⁵ Kierkegaard, Training in Christianity, 124ff as quoted in Loder, Religious Pathology, 173-74.

³⁶ Loder, Religious Pathology, 174.

bestowed through the imagination in which the disciple imaginatively sees, recognizes, knows himself or herself in Christ. However, this imaginative envisioning of one self in Christ is not the formal cause of faith, but is the instrumental means of its bestowal by God. Faith is given by the Holy Spirit through the creative response of the human spirit, i.e., the imagination, to that same Holy Spirit and the public proclamation of the church.

This position can be stated more exactly. Through the subjective, imaginative envisioning of oneself in Christ, as presented in the objective proclamation (image) of the church, faith is given by the Holy Spirit. The self is, thereby, transformed insofar as this new condition of faith pertains, through which the self is reconciled with God, the ground of its being. The imagination does not create faith of itself, nor is it to be identified with it; rather, it is through the imagination that faith is bestowed.

Furthermore, since the imagination serves the underlying condition, whether it be of faith or of despair, the imagination then comes to reflect the new condition of faith within its sphere of influence. Thus, the imagination is both the instrumental means through which the new condition of faith is given and the instrument through which this condition is expressed.

Speaking of revelation, the theologian Garret Green takes essentially the same position when he writes that the

imagination is the locus of revelation, but not its source.

Imagination, properly understood as the name of a basic human ability... identifies that specific point where according to Christian belief and experience, the Word of God becomes effective in human lives. More formally: imagination is the anthropological point of contact for divine revelation. It is not the "foundation," the "ground," the "preunderstanding," or the "ontological basis" for revelation; it is simply where it happens--better, the way in which it happens.³⁷

One of the main points that is being argued here is that the imagination cannot of itself alter the underlying condition of the individual. The imagination serves and reflects that condition. It follows, then, theoretically, that the new condition of faith must be given first, and in response to it, the imagination composes appropriate images, through which this condition is known. From a practical standpoint, however, the new condition and the corresponding images arise more or less simultaneously. For how can the condition of faith be known apart from an image to represent it to consciousness? On the other hand, how can an appropriate image be evoked without the condition of faith to evoke it? There seems to be a virtually instantaneous feedback, or reciprocity, or even a mutual indwelling, between the condition and the imagination, so that, from a practical standpoint, one cannot say which comes first and which comes second.

³⁷ Garrett Green, Imagining God: Theology and the Imagination (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), 144.

Before observing how this dynamic operates in Kierkegaard's experience, a concept that is relevant to this topic needs to be mentioned. There is a felt sense of one's condition that can be referenced apart from the images through which that condition is known. In other words, one's existential condition is experienced in its most basic aspect through the felt sense of it. As the term implies, felt sense has both cognitive and affective components, both of which are present in, and presented to consciousness by, the image. So, in the representation of one's existential condition, the imagination is primarily referencing this felt sense. This idea will be discussed in more detail below, for now it is simply being introduced in the context of the present discussion. Now the reciprocal relationship between the imagination and the existential-spiritual condition of the individual will be illustrated by considering Loder's discussion of Kierkegaard's transforming moment.

This experience of existential transformation followed upon a reconciliation between Kierkegaard and his father, suggesting the prototypical power of human relationships vis-a-vis the divine-human relationship. Furthermore, after this experience, Kierkegaard prepared himself for communion at church, after a significantly long absence, suggesting that it was, indeed, an instance of divine-human reconciliation. Finally, this was truly an event of

existential proportions, affecting the totality of Kierkegaard's existence. As Walter Lowrie writes, "[it] was ... super real, and it preoccupied him all his life long."³⁸ As Loder suggests, Kierkegaard's prodigious writings may be viewed as expressions of the implications packed into this event, as Kierkegaard interpreted it.³⁹ Loder quotes Kierkegaard's discription of this transforming moment.

There is such a thing as indescribable joy which glows through us as unaccountably as the Apostle's outburst is unexpected: "Rejoice, and again I say, Rejoice!"--not over this or that, but full jubilation "with hearts, and souls, and voices": "I rejoice over my joy, of, in, by, at, on, through, with my joy"--a heavenly refrain which cuts short, as it were, our ordinary song; a joy which cools and refreshes like a breeze, a gust of the trade wind which blows from the Grove of Mamre to the eternal mansion.⁴⁰

In his discussion of this moment in Kierkegaard's life, Loder says that it was an instance of what Kierkegaard "would later call a 'transparent' grounding in the 'Power that posits the self.'"⁴¹ By the phrase, "transparent grounding," Loder means a "direct knowledge of God." Defining "transparency" in the glossary of The Transforming Moment, Loder writes, "In Kierkegaardian literature, [it is]

³⁸ Walter Lowrie, A Short Life of Kierkegaard (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1961), 103 as quoted in Loder, Transforming Moment, 7.

³⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 7.

⁴⁰ Lowrie, A Short Life of Kierkegaard, 100 as quoted in Loder, Transforming Moment, 1-2.

⁴¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 5.

a direct knowledge of God without intervening persons, images or symbols."⁴² Clearly, Loder understands transparency to be a condition that is prior to, or beyond, any representation of it to consciousness via images, etc. Loder says, "Imagination, Kierkegaard later wrote, is the 'faculty instar omnium' (for all faculties), but it never supersedes transparency."⁴³

Although such an experience of transparency is not created by the imagination, and is always more than can be expressed in images, and even though the imagination may be momentarily overwhelmed by it; nevertheless, the imagination does work to create images that correspond to the felt meaning of the ineffable experience.

The transparency relationship of the human self to the Divine Presence temporarily bursts the limits of the imagination, but imagination recoils and images rush like a torrent into the pure light of the transparency as one shields one's eyes when surprised by a sudden burst of sunlight.⁴⁴

.....
Clearly, this experience is not a product of Kierkegaard's imagination: it is an ineffable experience for which his imagination tries to provide a cognitive shape that will unite conscious and unconscious in a new horizon of meaning for a radically transformed personal existence.⁴⁵

Rather than conclude that imaginative representations

⁴² Loder, Transforming Moment, 229.

⁴³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 5.

⁴⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 5.

⁴⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 6.

are a hindrance to the experience, it could be said that they actually further it. These images further the experience of transparency by articulating aspects of it to consciousness, which in turn opens up further aspects of the experience. Referring specifically to the torrent of prepositions in Kierkegaard's account, Loder comments, "Each additional preposition catches some new facet of the ineffable Source, and then, as if each preposition were still not enough, it is immediately superseded by a new surge of illumination."⁴⁶ Not only does this statement suggest the inexhaustible nature of the Source of the experience, it also implies that the imaginative representation of a given aspect of the experience has the effect of furthering the experience in so far as "a new surge of illumination" follows the image, in this case the verbal image of the preposition.

This observation further specifies the reciprocal relationship that has been traced between imagination and the existential condition. One could say that the articulation of the felt sense of the condition (of faith or transparency) opens one up to further aspects of that condition, which in turn seeks articulation in images appropriate to that aspect, etc. One has, then, the reciprocity mentioned above between the felt sense of the condition and the images which express it--and which open

⁴⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 5-6.

one up to it. From a practical standpoint, one cannot say which is cause and which is effect, for at any given moment in the total experience, each could be seen to be either. Having said that, what needs to be re-affirmed is the ontological priority of the new condition of faith or transparency. It cannot be said that the imagination is the formal cause of faith or transparency; God is that cause.

This dynamic is also present in the conversion of St. Paul, as Loder describes it. It will be recalled that Paul's conversion, as recounted in Acts 9 for example, consisted of the experience of a bright light that suddenly surrounded him, from which a voice addressed him. The light was (or mediated) the presence of Christ to Paul. The point that Loder makes about this experience is that it did not override Paul's imaginative capacities for structuring this immediate experience in a meaningful form. Rather than negating these capacities, it provoked them, being the grist for the imaginative mills of Paul's spirit. Loder writes,

He sees a reality that is partially constructed by his own intelligence. That his intelligence does constructive work in the knowledge he has of Christ does not detract from the authenticity of his envisioning. That Christ takes the initiative to provoke the constructive act by which Saul envisions his Presence does not eliminate Saul's participation in what he sees, hears, and comes to know.⁴⁷

Here Loder makes it clear that the initiative of Christ, his presence to Paul, is a necessary condition for

⁴⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 24.

the imaginative envisioning of that presence. The imagination of itself does not construct the presence; but, the presence is not known apart from the images that are constructed by Paul's imagination. In order for Christ to be known in a meaningful way to Paul, or anyone else, leaps of the imagination are necessary. However, such leaps would not be possible, or would be imaginary, apart from the real and independently existing presence of Christ.

Essentially, what this adds up to is that the presence of the divine is like the presence of a physical or social environment. There is an immediacy to it that is processed into a meaningful form by the creative activity of the imagination. The imagination does not create this environment, but this environment is not known apart from this creative work of the imagination. Furthermore, the spiritual presence may present a resolution to an existential conflict.

The position that spiritual reality, in this case the reality of God or Christ, is like other environmental realities is generally supported by philosopher William Alston. A brief look at his position might be useful as a conclusion to this section. Alston makes the point that the experience of God is analogous to sense experience. He does not mean that God is seen or heard as any other object in the world might be, but that the perception of God is like sense perception in that it involves the presentation of

something, which can be experienced as something. He writes,

Many people find it incredible, unintelligible, or incoherent to suppose that there could be something that counts as presentation, that contrasts with abstract thoughts in the way sense perception does, but is devoid of sensory content. So far as I can see, this simply evinces a lack of speculative imagination. Why suppose that the possibilities of experiential givenness, for human beings or otherwise, are exhausted by the process of our five senses? To begin with the most obvious point, it is certainly possible that other creatures should be sensitive to physical stimuli other than those to which our five senses are responsive; then to push the matter a bit further, why can't we also envisage permutations that do not stem from the ability of our physical sense organs, as ~~is~~⁴⁸ apparently the case in mystical perception.

The reader should not be misled by Alston's use of the phrase "mystical perception." He does not mean it to contrast with what one might call ordinary religious experience. It is not the point here to argue this distinction; rather, the point is to highlight Alston's contention that the experience of God is like sense experience in that it is a presentation of something which then is experienced as being God, Christ, etc.

This position is in opposition to that which is taken by many philosophers of religion, such as Stephen Katz, who maintains that there is no unmediated experience, either of

⁴⁸ William P. Alston, Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience (Ithica, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 17.

God or anything else.⁴⁹ While agreeing that conceptualization and mediation are a part of normal experience, the position taken in this dissertation is that there is an important aspect of all experience which is prior to, or beyond, mediation or interpretation via concepts, images, etc. This aspect is the immediacy of the given presentation of something (whether physical, social or spiritual), which is then interpreted as being this or that.

John Hick is another philosopher of religion who makes much of the mediated, or interpretive, aspect of experience, which he elaborates in the notion of "experiencing-as."⁵⁰ Hick argues that all experience has the character of "experiencing-as," meaning simply that all experience involves interpretation: when phenomenon X is interpreted as being an instance of category (or concept) Y, then X is "experienced-as" being Y. In emphasizing the importance of the interpretive aspect of experience, Hick seems to overlook the significance of the immediate, non-mediated aspect of experience. On this point, Alston's criticism of Hick is on target. Alston writes:

Now I do not agree with Hick that all experience of objects involves interpretation, taking the

⁴⁹ Steven T. Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," in Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis, ed. S. T. Katz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 26.

⁵⁰ For a recent statement of his position, see John Hick, An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent (London: Macmillian Press, 1989), 140-43, 153-71.

object to be such and such. No doubt normal adult sense perception, and spiritual perception as well, is heavily conceptualized; in being perceptually aware of the environment, we are typically simultaneously aware of what various things are, what they look like and are like and what their practical significance is for us. Normal perceptual experience is shot through with interpretation. Nevertheless, what makes this a matter of perceiving the house [for example], rather than just thinking about it, is the fact of presentation, givenness, the fact that something is presented to consciousness, is something of which I am directly aware. And this is something that is distinguishable from any elements of conceptualization, judgment, belief or other forms of interpretation, however rarely the former may⁵¹ be found without the latter in adult experience.

Although Hick emphasizes the interpretive aspect of experience as being determinative for what that experience is, his position leaves room for a different emphasis. For example, when discussing mystical experience, Hick defines it as "those forms of religious experience that express the presence of the Real, not as manifested in our material environment, but as directly affecting the human psyche."⁵² He then adds that such an immediate presentation of the Real to the human psyche is "received by some kind of extra-sensory awareness...."⁵³ It is this awareness of the Real that is then "transformed... [by] the mystic's own mind-set and creative imagination."⁵⁴

⁵¹ Alston, 27.

⁵² Hick, Interpretation of Religion, 165.

⁵³ Hick, Interpretation of Religion, 165.

⁵⁴ Hick, Interpretation of Religion, 169.

This position is similar to the one being presented here; however, there is a difference in emphasis. It is, in Alston's words, "The something that is distinguishable from any elements of conceptualization, judgment, belief or other forms of interpretation" (including images that is being emphasized here. This "something" which is other, and/or more than, the various forms of its interpretation (but which may, nevertheless, be appropriately, but not exhaustively, present in these forms) is the immediacy of spiritual presence.

Practical Implications for Pastoral Care and Counseling

Although there is no diagnostic or treatment question that emerges from this theoretical piece of the model, it is nevertheless of crucial practical importance. This piece forms the underlying presupposition for the whole model. Simply put, that presupposition is that there are some conflicts which can be resolved through the creative capacities of the self, i.e., the imagination, and there are other conflicts that cannot be resolved by the imagination alone, but can only be resolved by the initiative of God. The former are those situations that concern particular circumstances in an individual's life; the latter are those that involve the totality of the self. The latter are conflicts that have the self; the former are those that the self has.

Pastoral counseling aims at helping with both kinds of

conflicts. Consequently, pastoral counselors need to recognize this distinction and know the resources that are appropriate for each. In the former, the primary resource for conflict resolution is the human spirit's innate capacity to create, and recreate meaning. In the latter, the primary resource is the Holy Spirit's recreative power which transforms not just a given situation in one's life but all of one's existence.

The practical import of this consideration will be a counseling approach and method that corresponds to these underlying presuppositions. This is the subject of the last chapter. Briefly, it can be noted here that it is a client-centered approach which is revised to fit the character of the conflict. Such an approach recognizes the innate capacity of individuals to create meaning for both self and world and the limits of that capacity when confronted by an existential conflict that pervades all of the activities of the self, including the imagination. In conflicts involving existential dimensions, the client-centered approach aims primarily at facilitating the client's openness and response to the Holy Spirit in his or her life, and secondarily at facilitating the imaginative capacities of the client to create meaning. Of course, these imaginative capacities are involved in such cases in so far as the imagination creates meaning out of the felt sense of the Spirit's presence in his or her life, but the primary emphasis is upon getting

the client to attend to that presence in his or her experience.

CHAPTER 3

Theological Anthropology of Four Dimensions

This chapter discusses the second theoretical piece of the model: Loder's theological anthropology in terms of the four dimensions of being. These dimensions are: lived world, self, Void and Holy. Also, some of the ideas that were introduced in the first chapter in relation to this anthropology will be developed, while making explicit some presuppositions regarding the nature of religious experience. The notion of felt sense mentioned in the preceding chapter will be elaborated as a practical consideration of this theoretical piece of the model. It will be argued that the client's felt sense of his or her situation is of primary importance in answering the first diagnostic question in the use of this model, namely, "What is the dimensionality of the client's situation?"

Lived World

In this section Loder's anthropology of four dimensions is considered, beginning with the dimension of the lived world.¹ The lived world is essentially the world of meaning that human beings construct through the creative capacities of the imagination. The lived world is the domain of imaginative competence. It will be recalled that the imagination constructs meaningful wholes out of the disparate phenomena of the senses. These gestalts of

¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 71-75.

meaning constitute the world in which one lives. Precisely what constitutes an individual's lived world will vary, of course, depending upon personal experiences, developmental stage, native capacities, etc. The common thread is that this world of meaning is created through the imagination in interaction with the givens of the natural and social environment. Here is the imaginative synthesis of subjective and objective that was discussed above as it composes a meaningful world.

An important addition that Loder makes here is the bodily anchorage of this lived world. In this, Loder seems to be following Jean Piaget. Knowledge of the world begins with the interaction of the body with the environment. The bodily schemes through which one adapts to one's environment(s) as an infant are gradually transposed into mental schemes. These mental operations are analogous to the bodily schemes, as is suggested by the metaphorical use of language: one turns an idea over in one's mind to know it as one would turn a physical object over in one's hands as children (and as adults) to know it. As Loder says, "Nothing is in our 'worlds' that is not somehow rooted and grounded in our body."² Furthermore, Loder adds, "The body is imaginatively transposed and extended into personal, social and cultural worlds by the common genus of the

² Loder, Transforming Moment, 71.

imagination and the symbolic process...."³

This bodily anchorage of knowledge will be revisited when considering the work of Eugene Gendlin and John Macquarrie. Both have notions of bodily awareness that resemble Loder's. Gendlin's ideas, however, are primarily aimed at bodily knowledge of psychosocial situations, while Macquarrie's are concerned mainly with the human situation as a whole, the existential situation.

The simple point for now is that the imaginative construction of one's lived world is modeled after the ways of knowing that are rooted in the body-environment interaction. This model is, of course, elaborated in one's mental operations.

This view of the lived world is consistent with Loder's constructivist epistemology. The world of reality is, to large part, our own invention. We make the connections, through imaginative leaps, among the data that together comprise the worlds that are, for us, real.

It might prove helpful at this point to return to a consideration of Kierkegaard in this regard. A helpful distinction in Kierkegaard is elaborated by Stephen Evans. This distinction is that between "ordinary faith" and "eminent faith."⁴ The former has to do primarily with the

³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 71.

⁴ C. Stephen Evans, Kierkegaard's "Fragments" and "Postscript": The Religious Philosophy of Johannes Climacus (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1983), 261-70.

imagination and the lived world. The latter has to do with the underlying existential condition.

Evans addresses the same issue as did Loder in his first book: the construction of a belief about reality. Following Kierkegaard, Evans contends that there are essentially three components in such a construction: (1) the given datum, (2) the imagination, and (3) the will. The example that Evans uses to illustrate this dynamic in ordinary faith is that taken from Kierkegaard concerning the acquisition of a meaningful belief about a star.⁵

When one sees a star in the night sky, one sees a given datum. One does not see that this star has come into existence, although one may believe that it has. How does one come to this belief? First, one made an imaginative leap through which one attributed the concept, "come into existence," to this sensory datum. Secondly, one overcame whatever doubts about this actually being the case for this particular star through a resolve of the will. It is always possible that this star did not come into existence, that it is an exception. Such possibilities can only be overcome by a resolve of the will.

This leap of the imagination and the resolve of will is ordinary faith. It can be called faith because it involves something that is not seen. As Kierkegaard says, "Faith thus does not believe that the star is there, for that it

⁵ Evans, Kierkegaard's "Fragments," 261-62.

sees, but it believes that the star has come into existence."⁶

It is out of such faith leaps that "plausibility structures," as Evans calls them, are constructed.⁷ These are belief patterns in terms of which one discerns that which is plausible. These structures determine, in large part, what one takes to be real in the world. They are the ways that one habitually construes the world.

The parallels here with Loder's lived world are apparent. In particular, the crucial role that the imagination plays in both views should be pointed out. The imagination constructs beliefs about reality, which constitute one's plausibility structures, which comprise one's lived world. The role of the will that Evans mentions seems to be absent in Loder. However, a similar view of the will is implicitly present in Loder when he points out that the mediating image emerges with an immediacy that compels belief; that is, one is convinced in the moment of the image's emergence. A similar movement of the will is present, but not as differentiated in Loder as it is in

⁶ Soren Kierkegaard, Soren Kierkegaard's Samlede Voerker, vol. 4, eds. A. B. Drachman, J. L. Heiberg, and H. O. Lange (Copenhagen: Gyldendals Publishing House, 1902), 245 as quoted in Evans, Kierkegaard's "Fragments," trans. Evans, 262. For English translation, see Soren Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments or A Fragment of Philosophy, rev. trans. by Howard V. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 101.

⁷ Evans, Kierkegaard's "Fragments," 264.

Evans. Regardless of the minor differences between the two, one can see the similarities between the notions of lived world in Loder and Kierkegaard's ordinary belief as elaborated by Evans.

Eminent faith differs from this ordinary faith in that it is not limited to what is possible according to the plausibility structures.⁸ Eminent faith is a leap beyond these structures into a new reality (which then comes to characterize one's lived world). From the perspective of the plausibility structures, such a leap is absurd. The paradigm of such faith is, of course, the Absolute Paradox of the God-Human. In terms of the criteria established by the plausibility structures, the account of God entering history as a particular man is implausible. As Kierkegaard says, "This is the strangest of all things, the most improbable thing imaginable and is therefore the absolute paradox."⁹ To believe that it is true requires, then, more than ordinary faith. It requires more than an act of imagination and of will. Such faith must be a gift of God.

This theme will be picked up again when considering the dimensions of the Void and the Holy. For now, it represents simply a connection with the previous discussion of the relationship between imagination (ordinary faith) and faith

⁸ Evans, Kierkegaard's "Fragments," 266-70.

⁹ Kierkegaard as quoted by Evans, Kierkegaard's "Fragments," 267.

(eminent faith).

Self

The second dimension is that of the self.¹⁰ The self is a complex and subtle notion in Loder. He follows Kierkegaard, and other existentialists, in describing it. The following is a simplified and, hopefully, an accurate account of Loder's description of the self.

The self is both transcendent and immanent; or, to be more precise, the self is composed of both transcendent and immanent elements. Although Loder does not describe the self explicitly this way, it does seem to do justice to his position. The self has a body, and the self is a body. To illustrate this dual aspect of the self, Loder refers to the experiments of neurologist Wilder Penfield.

Penfield discovered what he called a "separate essence" which, in contrast to the brain, could be called "mind."¹¹ Penfield could activate the memories, emotions, etc. of the brain by means of an electric probe, but this separate essence could not be activated in the same way. This separate essence was the "I" evidenced to Penfield when the patient said to him, "You did that, I didn't," when referring to the activation of a memory by the electric

¹⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 75-80.

¹¹ See Wilder Penfield, The Mystery of the Mind: A Critical Study of Consciousness and the Human Brain (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), cited in Loder, Transforming Moment, 75.

probe.¹² This "I" transcended the purely physical basis of the brain; it was of a separate essence.

As Loder points out, however, the patient said "I," the English personal pronoun, rather than "Je" or "Ich," the French and German equivalents.¹³ So, this transcendent "I" was also immanent: transcending but also immanent in, embodied in, the cultural scripting of the brain. Thus, the self has and is a body; it is both transcendent and immanent.

Because the mind transcends the scripted patterns of the brain, it is able to recognize them and can change them. Loder remarks,

This kind of activity [changing these patterns] requires an energy or power of its own above, beyond anything that could be touched by Penfield's probing electrical stimulus. It is with this quality of energy that one says "I," that one transcends any structural pattern, previous experience, or accumulated data and creates new meaning.¹⁴

One might infer some important points from this statement. The way that the word "energy" is used suggests that it is the power behind the creative activity of making meaning. That is, it is the energy whereby connections are made, relationships are established, meanings are made. It should be noticed that this is basically the way that the

¹² Loder, Transforming Moment, 75.

¹³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 77.

¹⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 76.

work of the imagination has been described: by making connections, establishing relationships, the imagination is creating meaning. Thus, one could venture to say that this unique energy to which Loder refers is that of the imagination.

Furthermore, the imagination, this meaning making energy, is of a different order than are the elements which it connects in order to make meaning. As Loder said above, the "relationship itself [between A and B] is a different class of phenomenon from A or B."¹⁵ Since this energy is the energy of the self, it follows that this statement holds true for the self as well: the self is not to be identified with any one of its component parts, but is the relationship among them.

One might infer a virtual identity among the terms "imagination," "energy," and "self." The details concerning the ways that these terms do and do not refer to precisely the same phenomenon need not be worked out, however, their intimate relationship may be specified: the relating energy of the self, which creates meaning, is the imagination. The self is expressed through this creative work (energy) of the imagination. Two common aspects of these terms should be noted: (1) each term refers to a relationship, and (2) each term refers to a movement, an activity. It was already discussed how the imagination and energy are relating

¹⁵ See p. 30.

powers. They are known only in the movement of relating elements into meaningful wholes. It will now be considered how Loder describes the self as being a relationship; or more dynamically said, a relating-ship.

Here Loder is clearly indebted to Kierkegaard. One need only read Kierkegaard's definition of the self in The Sickness Unto Death to see this.¹⁶ Rather than complicate the issue with an analysis of Kierkegaard's definition, one can simply follow Loder in pointing out that the self is discovered by unpacking the meaning of the "I" that was just mentioned in referring to Penfield's experiment with the electric probe.¹⁷ Within this culturally scripted, and yet transcendent, "I" lies the self. The self is the relationship between the transcendence and the immanence of the individual. The self is neither the transcendence nor the immanence; it is the relationship between them. It is the relating of them. As one becomes aware of this relating as something that is distinct from the components that are related by means of it, then the self becomes conscious of itself, and it "relates itself to itself."

As the self becomes aware of itself, it also becomes aware of its separation from its Source. In this awareness of its isolation from the Source of its being the self

¹⁶ Soren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling, and The Sickness Unto Death, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), 146.

¹⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 78.

experiences its vulnerability. This condition of separation from its Source is "fallenness," and its phenomenological aspect is "anxiety." That is, the self's awareness of itself in its freedom and possibility evokes anxiety because the self realizes that it is separated from the "Power that posited it" (as a relationship) and which can sustain it in its freedom. The self succumbs to this anxiety and grasps at finitude (one of its components), thereby losing itself as the positive relationship that it was intended to be. By grasping at false grounds to stabilize and secure itself, its freedom is crippled. As Loder says it,

As open to its world, to its embodiment, to new meaning and purpose, the self is extremely vulnerable; it experiences what Kierkegaard called 'dizziness of freedom' and out of this dreadful condition [anxiety] it will fall into false grounds for securing itself, paradoxically attempting to establish its integrity of openness by locking into universal systems of value or doctrine, enclosing it in presumably 'open community' or by exercising a compulsive openness emulating Protean behavior.¹⁸

Only when the self is grounded in its Source is it able to be itself and to confidently and positively use its freedom to its full intent.

Void

The gap between the self and its Source is one aspect of the third dimension of human being: the Void.¹⁹ The Void is that dimension of human being which threatens it

¹⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 79.

¹⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 80-85.

with the possibility of non-being. It refers to existential negation in its various forms: death, guilt, meaninglessness (to use Tillich's list).²⁰ The Void is absence. The Void is the absence of meaning, freedom, joy, health, intimacy, being itself, etc. This absence is represented in loneliness, depression, guilt, death. This absence is a "haunting presence" (Sartre) that draws everything to itself. The Void surrounds all the lived worlds that are constructed by the ungrounded self (the self in its separation from its Source), always threatening to erupt in various two dimensional conflicts and rendering two dimensional constructs ultimately futile.

One naturally tries to avoid the Void. One futilely tries to compose out the Void in one's constructions of one's lived worlds. That is, an attempt is made to construct lived worlds in such a way that the ultimate threats of the Void can be denied. With each brush with the Void, in its varying contexts and degrees, one redoubles the efforts to compose worlds where it cannot intrude. At some level of awareness one knows that these efforts are futile, but it seems that there is no other option, apart from abject despair. If one does not succumb to such despair, then one engages in self-deception, deceiving oneself into believing that the Void is conquered. For example, to fully confront the Void as represented in death means to recognize

²⁰ Tillich, Courage to Be, 40-54.

the futility of constructing meaningful lived worlds: they will all come to nothing and be forgotten amid the ongoing cycles of nature. Even the planet upon which they were constructed will itself eventually vanish into empty space. To avoid the resulting despair, one must pretend that death is not real, or that one is uniquely invulnerable to it. Of course, one may come to the conviction that death has been somehow overcome by the Holy, but that is an instance of four dimensional transformation, one that lies beyond the confrontation with the reality of the Void.

As indicated above, this absence which is the Void is not simply "out there" in the world around the person so that one can build an environment to keep it out; the Void is principally "in here," in the constitution of the self. The self is built on the Void, like a city built on a fault line. No matter how grand the city may be, it is always vulnerable to collapse. As Loder says,

We always have difficulty composing out or covering over the nothingness because it is not merely 'out there,' it is embedded in the very heart of the untransformed self. The deepest sense of absence that we have is the separateness of the self from its Source.²¹

Holy

Beyond this sense and reality of the Void is the Holy.²² The Holy is the fourth dimension of human being.

²¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 81.

²² Loder, Transforming Moment, 85-91.

It refers, of course, to the Source of the self's being, the ground of its being, the ground upon which it can be itself. This is the "Power that posits the self," that for which "our hearts are restless" (Augustine). The Holy is the presence of Being-itself becoming manifest in the transformation of fallen creation into redeemed existence; it is the power that overcomes the Void in the creation of new being.

In describing the Holy, Loder comments that it is the influence of this dimension that enables victims of the Void to continue to live and strive for authentic existence. He says, "We continue to live precisely because in the center of the self, for all its perversity, we experience again and again the reversal of those influences that invite despair and drive toward the Void. The reason that we do not cease to live is the deep sense that we are not merely three dimensional creatures."²³

One of Loder's illustrations of the experience of the Holy is from his own life. After his father died, he says that he fell into a serious depression (Void). As he describes it, "[his father's clothes] were still now and useless, and so was the 'world' in which I tried to compose meaning. Everything had turned to cardboard, flat and empty; every day was the same dull experience regardless of

²³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 85.

whom I saw or what occurred."²⁴

The reversal of this condition occurred on the heels of Loder striking out in anger at God, exclaiming, "If you're there, do something!"²⁵ Loder describes what followed as a feeling in his body "like gentle electricity."²⁶ This presence in his body energized him and in response to it he found himself singing the hymn, "Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine." In his excitement, he read Emil Brunner's book, The Scandal of Christianity, as if he "had suddenly entered into the central intuition out of which the book been written."²⁷ He felt that he had made contact with the same power with which Brunner was connected when he wrote the book, so that Loder could say that he "recognized, more than read, everything that was being said."²⁸

The point is that this encounter reversed his depression and enabled him to begin to recreate his world in a meaningful way, a way that corresponded to the intuition of the Holy present in the event. "The Holy," he said, "constituted the fourth dimension of my being."²⁹

²⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 87.

²⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 87.

²⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 87.

²⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 88. See also Emil Brunner, The Scandal of Christianity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961).

²⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 88.

²⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 88.

The Holy is the power which transforms the condition of human being in which the Void is determinative. Indeed, the Void itself is transformed, becoming the means through which the Holy enters two dimensional existence and transforms it. The threat of the Void, real as it is, becomes the entry of the Holy into mundane existence. Such an idea is captured in the church's title for the day of the Lord's crucifixion: Good Friday. The Void of the crucifixion is good only to the extent that through it the Holy entered creation in a remarkable and definitive way, that is, as the Source of the new creation brought into being by Christ's resurrection. Or, as Loder says of Kierkegaard, "Kierkegaard repeatedly insisted with bewildering brilliance that the faces of the Void become the faces of God."³⁰

To sum up, Loder's theological anthropology is one that takes into account four dimensions of being: lived world, self, Void and Holy. To address the full reality of human beings, then, one would need to concern oneself with all four dimensions. However, one tends to exclude the latter two dimensions; instead, one constructs worlds of meaning that deny the pervasiveness of the Void and the radically reorienting presence of the Holy. One often lives one's life within the seemingly self-sufficient dimensions of self-world. According to Loder, there are developmental reasons why this is the case. It might be useful, then, to

³⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 85.

look at Loder's understanding of the dynamics of normal human development in terms of the four dimensions of human being.

Loder says: "Putting it in broad outline, something is inherently wrong with so-called normal human development. Normal development is psychologically constructed, socially supported, and culturally maintained so that people are drawn out of the full four dimensions of their being."³¹ Loder offers an intriguing account of why this is so.³²

During the birth process, as the infant moves from the security of the womb through the birth canal, he/she nearly suffocates. Loder refers to this birth trauma as "the primal existential negation."³³ By that he means that this is the original experience of the threat of non-being. Once the infant emerges from the womb, he/she begins the search for a stabilizing center to secure him/her against the chaos of his/her new environment. The infant reacts in random, but instinctive, movements. These instinctive movements (grasping, sucking, focusing, etc.) have survival value for the infant, but none of them can provide the center for

³¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 157.

³² Loder is particularly indebted in this account to Rene A. Spitz, The First Year of Life: A Psychoanalytic Study of Normal and Devian Development of Object Relations (New York: International Universities Press, 1965).

³³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 162.

which the infant is "intuitively" searching.³⁴ These "functional competencies," as Loder call them, cannot ground the infant's total existence.³⁵

It is the human face which provides this integrating center for the infant. The smiling, affirming face of another person becomes "the primary organizer of the personality."³⁶ The infant's sense of self and wholeness is found in the "mirror" of the face of this loving other.

Loder contends that this experience of centered wholeness in the face of a gracious, loving other is prototypical of the experience of God, the Divine Presence that centers the self in the totality of its existence. However, there is a complication that intrudes into the development of the infant and which marks the life of the adult individual with a "cosmic loneliness" until his/her personality is centered in the Divine Presence.³⁷

As the infant develops, he/she is able to distinguish faces, and is able, therefore, to recognize the mother (primary caregiver). This is a complication because now the infant can register the mother's absence and is vulnerable to the anxiety that this absence evokes. This sense of absence and its anxiety are so powerful that "the absence of

³⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 162.

³⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 162.

³⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 162.

³⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 161.

the mother's face becomes the second organizer of the personality."³⁸ To further complicate the infant's situation, he/she soon begins to hear "no" from this loving, but frequently absent, other. Coupled with the inner sense of absence, these external interdictions are all the more powerful.

As a reaction to these negations, the child is driven to incorporate negativity into the structure of his/her development. The child learns to say "no" to the world with the energy that the world seems to have said "no" to him/her. The child adopts a defensive posture toward the world. As Loder says it, "The developmental solution to this overpowering sense of absence, combined with the external threat of punishment or abandonment (perhaps reliving the original existential negation of birth), is to shift the center of personality from an integrative to a defensive posture."³⁹ The shift of the center of the personality is from the integrating power of the loving other to the ego, upon which the personality relies to defend it against the various threats of negation. According to Loder, this is the origin of the "autonomous ego."⁴⁰

As a part of the defensive posture toward the world,

³⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 164.

³⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 164.

⁴⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 164.

the ego seeks to control inner and outer events. It learns to distort what it cannot control: it deceives itself that its functional capacities are adequate to its needs.

Furthermore, it represses the threats of the Void and the memory of a loving other as its integrating center. With the shift of the personality's center to the ego and its capacities, the individual loses that sense of wholeness that he/she experienced in the face of the loving other and, in effect, substitutes ego competencies for love.

Nevertheless, within this "pattern of reaction that grounds the ego in negation,"⁴¹ there persists a longing for an integrating center that will ground the self beyond the autonomous ego and the threats of the Void. Loder expresses this situation well in the following,

This pattern, built on the negative foundation of the ego, implies that in any context where the developing person may encounter ego failure, the underlying sense of void intrudes, compelling the threatened ego into developing further competencies... all to the end that the ego's "world" may be not only recomposed but extended, and the sense of the void once again repressed. This results in a distortion of the human spirit not only because there is an unwillingness to recognize that human being is essentially four dimensional, but also because the void will inevitably overshadow the ego's "worlds," as does the nostalgia for the more deeply repressed longing for the enduring Face. Yes, the four-dimensionality of human being will express itself anyway, but the question is whether the intentional efforts of the ego cooperate with or distort what it means to be fully human. This is fundamentally the question of whether the personality will in fact undergo a recentering

⁴¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 166.

that displaces the ego, or will, in quiet desperation, persist in its addiction, distorting and tearing two-dimensional life by attempting to stretch it over the four dimensions of human existence.⁴²

One can perhaps see how Loder could claim that normal human development draws us out of the full four dimensions of our being. Ego development in particular is based upon a denial of the primal experiences of the Void and the prototypical experience of the Holy (the human face). Nevertheless, it is important to stress that the pattern for four dimensional existence has been given in the earliest experiences of the human being. The "cosmic loneliness" that haunts many adult lives is partner to the equally foundational experience of the presence of a loving other that integrates the self beyond its own functional capacities and the Void. That experience inspires hope that there is a presence that can provide the centering for the adult self that the human face provided for the infant. That presence is the Holy, and the experience of recentering the self from the ego to the Holy is the event, or process, that Loder calls conviction, or four dimensional transformation.

At this point it may be appropriate to reconsider a weakness in Loder's anthropology that was introduced in the first chapter. As is often the case, one's strength can also be one's weakness; this seems to be true of Loder's

⁴² Loder, Transforming Moment, 166-67.

theological anthropology. The strength of his theological position is that it rightly emphasizes the radical nature of the fall. That is, there is a Void in the constitution of the self, and in its lived worlds, which can only be filled by the Holy. None of the functional competencies of the self, none of the creative constructs of the human imagination, no changes in its lived worlds, will, of themselves, be able to fill this Void. That Void persists among all these two dimensional changes. Loder's anthropology gives expression to the Augustinian dictum: "You have made us for yourself, oh Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You." This is the strength of Loder's anthropology, and it must be affirmed and incorporated into the practice of pastoral care and counseling. It also has its weakness.

The weakness is that it tends to restrict the movement of the Holy in the lives of human beings. It seems that the Holy can only access the self-lived world dimensions through the Void. That is, the Holy is experienced only through, and beyond, confrontation with the Void, and only as the radical recentering of the self that characterizes conviction, or what might be called conversion. In the experience of the Holy, Loder's position seems to be that it must be all or nothing. In terms of human development, for example, it would seem that the Holy could not be positively involved in the ego development of the self that is not yet

centered in the Holy. This assessment echoes James Fowler's critique of Loder when Fowler asks, "Must all preconversion constructions of ego and faith be understood as perverse and as denials of the Holy?"⁴³ Although Loder nowhere explicitly says as much, the bent of his thought suggests that he would reply to Fowler in the affirmative: preconversion two dimensional constructions of the ego are denials of, and are not to be construed as being experiences of, the Holy. The answer to Fowler's question that is advocated in this dissertation is that some are and some are not: some preconversion constructions of the ego are denials of the Holy, but one cannot say a priori that all such constructions are necessarily denials of the Holy.

Affirming the strength of Loder's position, one could agree that ego competencies in particular, and two dimensional constructs in general, can function as defenses against, and be based upon denials of, the Void and, more particularly, the Holy. Correcting the weakness of Loder's position, one could argue that the Holy can be active in some two dimensional constructs of the unconverted self. It could be argued that the Holy is present and active in the two dimensional constructs that are prototypical of four dimensional transformation. This is to argue simply that,

⁴³ See James W. Fowler and James E. Loder, "Conversations on Fowler's Stages of Faith and Loder's The Transforming Moment," in Religious Education 77 no. 2 (March-April 1982): 147.

first, the grace of the Holy is present in events which are not the radical recentering that is four dimensional transformation; and, secondly, because the Holy is One, because the Holy is consistent, the grace in the former will be like the grace in the latter, that is, the former will be prototypical of the latter. It seems that one can affirm this position without denying the strength of Loder's position.

This position allows for the leading of the Spirit in the self-lived world dimensions of the unconverted individual. The Spirit could be seen as being active in directing the self-lived world dialectic prototypically, thus opening the person to the principle, or pattern, of grace which will come to govern his/her life in conversion. The prototypical experience would not be seen simply as an analogue of conversion (as Loder would seem to have it to be), but also as part of the process of conversion itself, a process that Loder rightly emphasizes culminates in the recentering of the self in the Holy. Within this position, a way is opened within the parameters of Loder's anthropology for the process of gradual conversion, a dynamic that Loder's restrictive interpretation seems unable to accommodate.

Reference to the types of grace that Paul Tillich mentions might help to clarify this position. Tillich says,

first of all, that there are "two forms" of grace.⁴⁴ The first is essentially that which brings creation into being and endows it with its various capacities: "God's... creativity," as Tillich calls it.⁴⁵ The second is the grace of redemption: "God's saving activity," as Tillich calls it.⁴⁶ There is, however, a third form of grace which Tillich mentions almost incidentally, and he calls it "providential grace."⁴⁷ This third form refers to those graces in "nature and history" which point to and lead toward saving grace.⁴⁸ As such, providential grace is consistent with the grace of creation because it leads to the fulfillment of the creature, and it is also consistent with saving grace since it leads to, and prepares for, the reconciliation of the estranged creature with the Creator, which is the mark of saving grace. As Tillich says, "It [providential grace] prepares one for saving grace...."⁴⁹

Loder's position contains within it the first two forms of grace that Tillich mentions. What Loder considers to be simply two dimensional analogues to saving grace occur

⁴⁴ Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 285.

⁴⁵ Tillich, Systematic Theology, 1: 285.

⁴⁶ Tillich, Systematic Theology, 1: 285.

⁴⁷ Tillich, Systematic Theology, 1: 285.

⁴⁸ Tillich, Systematic Theology, 1: 285.

⁴⁹ Tillich, Systematic Theology, 1: 285.

within the realm of experience that Tillich refers to as the grace of creation. Saving grace, of course, refers to what Loder would call conviction, or four dimensional transformation. What Loder's position lacks is something like the third form of grace that Tillich names. While this grace is not that which radically recenters the self in the Holy, it does prepare for that, and it is a grace of the Holy. It is itself an event of grace as well as being a preparation for a further event of grace. To be clear, it is a preparation for a further event of grace in so far as it initiates, or furthers, the individual's process of entrusting him or herself to the Divine Presence which will ground his/her personality beyond the functional capacities of the ego and the threats of the Void. Such a notion is reminiscent of the words of St. John: "And from his [Christ's] fullness have we all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16, RSV).

By way of an example of the preparatory dynamic being offered here, consider an instance of client-centered counseling. The counselor accepts the client as he/she is in a way that is analogous to the way that God's grace in Christ is experienced in conversion. The client's experience of the counselor's acceptance is not simply an analogue of God's grace, however, but is itself an expression of it. Granted, it is not the grace of conversion (not "saving grace"), but that need not

disqualify it as grace. Furthermore, when seen from the perspective of conversion, it retains its character as analogue (without losing its character as grace) because it is like the grace of conversion and can be seen as preparatory for it. Within the two dimensional experience of client-centered counseling, the client experiences the grace of the Holy in terms of the acceptance of the counselor prior to, but consistent with (and thus preparatory for) the radical recentering of the self in the totality of its existence in the gracious Face of God, which is conversion, or four dimensional transformation.

It should be pointed out that the client-centered method of counseling (which will be discussed more fully below) is particularly apt for adapting Loder's ideas. The mirroring, accepting presence of the client-centered counselor is reminiscent of the affirming, mirroring presence of the human face which centered the personality of the infant, and it anticipates the grace of the Holy in Christ which centers the personality of the adult. As such, its effect is all the more powerful in bringing about four dimensional healing.

Summing up this current discussion, one could say that the weakness of Loder's position is that it seems unable to allow for the experience of grace in two dimensions prior to a four dimensional transformation. Its strength is that it makes clear and rightly emphasizes the distinction between

the grace that helps resolve two dimensional conflicts and that which recenters the self in the Holy.

Furthermore, Loder's point about the deficiency of normal human development need not be denied. For it certainly may be the case that even if the Holy is positively involved in the two dimensional aspects of human development in an unconverted individual, that involvement might not lead to the opening of the self to a recentering in the Holy. That is, the very actions of the Holy which could have lead to conversion may be distorted in ways that further alienate the self from the Holy. More generally, in spite of the influence of the Holy in the self-lived world constructs of the imagination, these constructs may still be used to defend against the Void and the recentering of the self in the Holy. But this possibility that grace may not have its full effect is not grounds for denying its presence, "For he [God] makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45b, RSV).

Practical Implications for Pastoral Care and Counseling

The following points are crucial for understanding the practical importance of this piece of the model. First, all four dimensions are present (implicitly or explicitly) in all human situations. Second, the focus of a given counseling situation may not include all four dimensions, but may be located within the dimensions of the self-lived

world, for example. Finally, the dynamics for resolving the two dimensional aspects of a conflict are similar to, but different from, those involved in resolving the four dimensional aspects of a conflict. The similarity is found in the grammar of transformation, which will be discussed in the next chapter; the difference is that two dimensional conflicts, if they may be called that, are resolved primarily through the imaginative creations of the human spirit, while four dimensional conflicts, existential conflicts, can only be resolved by the creative power of the Holy Spirit.

Dimensional Distinctions and Relationships

These three points are instances of the familiar categories of distinction and relationship among the dimensions. They also suggest the first diagnostic question in the use of this model: "What is the dimensionality of the conflict that the client is presenting?" Since all the dimensions are present in every human situation, it should be clear that this is not a question of either/or: either two or four dimensions. Instead, the question is best framed in terms of figure/ground. The question concerns that which is emerging as figure, or focus, and that which is receding as background in a given counseling situation. Sometimes the proper focus is within the two dimensions of self-lived world, with the Void and the Holy forming the background. Sometimes the reverse is true: the focus is on

the way that the Void calls into question the sufficiency of the self and its lived worlds, a question that can only be answered by the Holy.

The importance of answering this diagnostic question appropriately is that the nature of counselor interventions is effected by it. In particular, since conflicts within the two dimensions of self-lived world may be resolved by the creative capacities of the human imagination, the pastoral counselor serves his/her client by intervening in ways that facilitate this creative potential of the client. Since conflicts that involve the four dimensions of human being, existential conflicts, can only be resolved by the grace of the Holy, the pastoral counselor serves his/her client by facilitating the client's awareness of, and openness to, the presence and power of the Holy in his/her life.

The distinction implied in this question of dimensionality is obviously important for the practice of pastoral care and counseling, as is the question itself, of course. In attending to it, however, the pastoral counselor should not lose sight of the equally important concern with the latent, or background, dimensions of a conflict, for the contours of a given figure will be affected by its ground.

For example, when the Void and the Holy are the background in a given session in which the two dimensional aspects are the figure, or focus, these background

dimensions will influence the way that the two dimensional conflict is resolved. They will limit the range of options, so to speak, from which the human imagination may choose in constructing a resolution. As was pointed out above, one's orientation toward the Void and the Holy will be a factor in the way that one constructs one's two dimensional reality. Furthermore, it may be the case that a satisfactory resolution to the two dimensional aspects of a situation is precluded by one's orientation toward the Void and the Holy. Such cases are typical in addictions to substances such as alcohol where reliance upon a "higher power" is seen as prerequisite for satisfactory resolutions to two dimensional, interpersonal or intrapsychic, conflicts.⁵⁰ In such cases, the two dimensional presenting problem of the client may not be resolved without recourse to the full four dimensional dynamics involved. So, the latent dimensions of the Void and the Holy should not be forgotten when the primary focus of the counseling is on the dimension of self and lived world.

Likewise, when the focus is on the existential confrontation with the Void and the radically reorienting activity of the Holy, the influence of the self-lived world dialectic should not be overlooked, for the specifics of the two dimensional situation that is the occasion for the

⁵⁰ This dynamic will be significant in the extended case study of Tim in Chapter 5.

emergence of the existential conflict will shape that conflict and its resolution. Returning to the earlier example of the boy whose father died, the fact that it was the boy's father who died rather than someone else, will have a unique effect on the particular way that this boy will confront the Void as it is represented by death and the way that the Holy will be experienced as resolution.

Obviously, this piece of the model offers a lot for the pastoral counselor to consider in his/her practice. To be effective in the use of the model, the counselor must first have a personal knowledge of the characteristics of the four dimensions of human being, their relationship and their distinctions. This personal knowledge is acquired through study, of course, but it also comes from reflection on his/her own experience. Unless he/she has a sense of the Void and the Holy in his/her own life, for example, it will be difficult to recognize it in the narrative of the client.

However, the counselor's knowledge in this regard is not the only guide in the effective use of this model. In discerning the dimensional focus of the client's conflict and the way that the latent dimensions are influencing this focus, the client's experiencing is primary. In assessing the dimensional focus of the conflict, for example, there are no psychometric devices to administer; there are no objective checklists to consult that would eliminate the subjective element; there is no escape from the risk of

discernment. The primary diagnostic tool is the client's own experiencing. This is the topic of the next section.

Felt Sense

The question arises, "How might the pastoral counselor judge if he\she is facing a two or four dimensional conflict in the client?" Or, "How might the pastoral counselor discern the influence of the latent dimensions on the presenting conflict and its resolution?" There are, of course, many factors to consider in an answer, but the one that is the focus in this dissertation, is the experiencing of the client, or his\her felt sense of his\her situation. In other words, the short answer to the question is, "Ask the client." This does not mean that the pastoral counselor should matter of factly ask the client if he\she is dealing with a two or four dimensional conflict, for example. Rather, the client must take the lead in discerning the nature of the conflict. The client's own experiencing is the principle referent in this regard. This is not to say that the client will immediately have at hand the appropriate words, concepts, images, etc. to adequately articulate the nature of the conflict. Helping the client to verbalize this is one of the things that the counselor is there to do. What the client does have is a felt sense of the conflict. In a deep, preconceptual, bodily way the client knows the nature of the conflict, so that he\she can tell when it is appropriately articulated. This is true

whether the conflict is two or four dimensional.

This idea of a felt sense, or felt meaning, as it is sometimes called, has periodically appeared above. The time has come to focus on it. This idea is present in, but not explicated, in Loder's work. It will be briefly elaborated by referring to the work of Eugene Gendlin for a psychotherapeutic perspective.⁵¹ Then Gendlin's ideas will be expanded by discussion of the same phenomenon from a theological perspective using John Macquarrie.

For Gendlin, a felt sense or felt meaning is a cognitive feeling state, or condition. It is a bodily awareness, a feeling with implicit meaning. It is a deep, preconceptual sense of a given situation. It is "A bodily awareness of a situation or person or event," says Gendlin.⁵² Furthermore, it

encompasses everything you feel and know about the given subject at a given time - encompasses it and communicates it to you all at once rather than detail by detail. Think of it as a taste if you like, or a great musical chord that makes you feel a powerful impact....⁵³

A felt sense is not just emotion, nor is it simply

⁵¹ See Eugene T. Gendlin, Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning: A Philosophical and Psychological Approach to the Subjective (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962); Focusing (New York: Everest House Publishers, 1978); and "Experiential Psychotherapy," in Current Psychotherapies, 2nd ed., ed. Raymond J. Corsini (Itasca, Ill.: F. E. Peacock Publishers, 1979).

⁵² Gendlin, Focusing, 35.

⁵³ Gendlin, Focusing, 35.

cognition; it is both, as present in a bodily awareness. It is an actual datum of experience; one can "focus" attention on it. By focusing on it, one may differentiate the various factors contained in it, thereby coming to know one's situation in a depth and to an extent that is denied to cognition or emotion alone.

When one's differentiation of the felt sense is appropriately articulated, there is a "body shift," as Gendlin calls it.⁵⁴ The word or image fits both the affective and the cognitive nature of the felt sense; and the tension surrounding the desire to articulate, and come to know, the meaning of the feeling, is released in, and felt by, the body. As a further consequence of appropriate articulation of the felt sense, other aspects, more details, of the felt sense open up--for articulation, etc.; thus, the whole experience is "carried forward."⁵⁵

In order to further clarify the meaning of felt sense, let me briefly relate a personal incident. I was trying to explain to one of my professors how I felt about his critique of my work. I was having a difficult time expressing this feeling. Nevertheless, this feeling was a datum of my awareness; I was intentionally holding this felt sense in awareness, referring to it as I searched my vocabulary for the appropriate word to express it. As it

⁵⁴ Gendlin, Focusing, 42.

⁵⁵ Gendlin, "Experiential Psychotherapy," 341-42.

turned out, the professor incidentally used the word "scalpel" in responding to me. That was it. That word fully articulated the felt meaning upon which I was focusing. My body relaxed as the image of "scalpel" made its connections with this felt sense. A scalpel is both healing and hurting at the same time, which was how his critique felt to me. Moreover, anesthetic is used in surgery, which was analogous to the way that this professor would first praise my work, or at least my efforts, before he applied the scalpel. Perhaps this mundane example will convey something of the feel of felt sense.

From this short explanation of felt sense, it may be apparent that it can serve as a guide in discerning the nature of a client's conflict. The pastoral counselor has, therefore, a referent by which to access the nature and dimensionality of the presenting problem of the client, namely, the client's own felt sense of it.

In regard to Loder's anthropology, the position taken here is that this dynamic of the articulation of the felt meaning of a given situation operates throughout the four dimensions of being. Gendlin, being a psychotherapist, is primarily concerned with the felt sense as it contains, and through its articulation, conveys knowledge of one's proximate situation, or what Loder calls the two dimensions of being. For the idea of felt sense to be of diagnostic help in all four dimensions, Gendlin's idea of the felt

sense must be enlarged to include one's ultimate, or existential, situation. The felt sense of one's existential condition can be intentionally referenced and articulated in the same way that one's two dimensional situation can be. That is to say, in John Macquarrie's word, one's felt sense of one's existence can be "disclosive" of that existence.

This basic position is taken by Macquarrie in many of his books. One first might note one of his earlier philosophical works where he deals with "feelings" or "mood" in his analysis of human existence. His contention is that feelings are a mode of apprehending our being-in-the-world, a mode which has a bodily anchorage.

It is through the body that we are in the world and participate in the happenings of the world. Those feelings that are, in one aspect bodily (and therefore physical and worldly) events and in another aspect, inward experiences of the existent, are perhaps our most direct opening on to the world.⁵⁶

This bodily feeling for the world is one way that we come to know the world. This point is clearly stated in the following.

If our account of feelings... is correct so that it can be acknowledged that they 'attune' us to the world and that at least the more sophisticated feelings are closer to reason, then the possibility that feelings may yield some genuine insights having philosophical interest cannot be dismissed out of hand. It could even be the case that the intimate relation to the world through feeling could disclose to us truths concerning the world such as would be quite inaccessible through

⁵⁶ John Macquarrie, Existentialism (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1972), 157.

the mere beholding which characterizes our observations of the world through the senses.⁵⁷

Macquarrie can be seen here to parallel Gendlin in regard to both the bodily anchorage and the disclosive character of feeling or mood.

Macquarrie picks this idea up in his later work, Principles of Christian Theology.⁵⁸ Here he distinguishes between pure subjective projection, on the one hand, and objective, disinterested observation, on the other. What is disclosed in mood is the subjective participation in an objective situation.⁵⁹ Such participation reveals, not just the subject's inner emotional state, but some aspects of the objective situation as well, aspects that may otherwise be missed.

We are concerned here with something that is neither subjective nor objective, to an unbroken unity of subject and object within a situation or structure that is known from within. This unbroken unity is experienced on the level of feeling, while as yet there is no analytical breakdown of the situation in discursive or subject-object thinking. In feeling we intuit the situation in which we find ourselves....⁶⁰

It seems that what Macquarrie means by "intuition," "feeling" or "mood" is essentially what Gendlin has in mind by "felt sense." However, Macquarrie is more interested in

⁵⁷ Macquarrie, Existentialism, 158.

⁵⁸ John Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology, 2nd ed. (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1977).

⁵⁹ Macquarrie, Principles, 98.

⁶⁰ Macquarrie, Principles, 98.

how one's existential situation is disclosed in feeling than is Gendlin. The point is that the nature of one's situation is disclosed through one's felt sense of it, whether that situation is two dimensional or four. One can follow Macquarrie further in specifying the felt sense of the Void and the Holy.

When one considers the felt sense of the Void, if one follows the existentialists, as does Macquarrie, one will encounter the notion of anxiety. Existential anxiety is a disclosive mood through which one may come to apprehend the Void. Anxiety discloses the existential condition of "fallenness." The precise articulation of this felt sense differs among the existentialists. For example, Macquarrie cites Satre's appraisal of how Heidegger and Kierkegaard differ in this respect: "Kierkegaard describing anxiety in the face of what one lacks characterizes it as anxiety in the face of freedom. But Heidegger considers anxiety instead as the apprehension of nothingness."⁶¹ This dissertation articulated the felt sense of anxiety above in both Kierkegaardian and Heideggerian terms: anxiety discloses the self as possibility and freedom, and as such, surrounded by nothingness or Void, separated from the Source of its being, the Source which can sustain it in this

⁶¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), 29, as quoted in Macquarrie, Existentialism, 170.

possibility and freedom.

Such varying symbolizations of the felt sense of anxiety confirms, rather than contradicts, the meaning of felt sense. One's felt sense references a reality that is more than that which can be captured in any one articulation of it. Though Kierkegaard and Heidegger differ in respect to specific articulations, that does not mean that one or the other is wrong, nor that a felt sense cannot convey true information about one's situation. On the contrary, both may adequately express a particular aspect of the meaning contained in the feeling of anxiety, which is disclosive of more than can be contained in any one statement.

However, by the same token, because the felt sense is disclosive, because it does contain real information concerning one's situation, not just any articulation will do. There is a match to be made here by the imagination. The imagination works to compose images that fit both the affective and cognitive components of the felt sense. Some compositions may miss the felt meaning altogether, others may approximate it, while still others may adequately express it, or at least one aspect of it. Again, a standard of judgement is the body shift that Gendlin mentions; that deep relaxation in the body, and it might be added, mind and spirit, that accompanies an appropriate match between felt sense and its expression.

To return to Macquarrie, one finds that he articulates

the feeling of anxiety in much the same way that the Void has been described in this dissertation. Contending that "anxiety is not a mere subjective emotion but a mode of awareness," Macquarrie answers the question, "Awareness of what?" by referring to the awareness of "cease[ing] to be in death and fail[ing] to be in guilt."⁶²

He then goes on to add:

We become aware of a nullity that enters into the very way in which we are constituted. The mood of anxiety may bring more than this. The world too sinks into nothing, it gets stripped of the validity and meanings that we normally assign to the things and events that belong to it, and it becomes indeterminate, characterized by the same kind of emptiness and nullity that we know in ourselves.⁶³

Macquarrie goes on to say that such experiences of the Void are so disturbing that we tend to create illusions that will enable us to escape it. "Yet," he says, "I believe that the mood is universal in the sense that at one time or another it catches up with most of us."⁶⁴ Indeed, one of the fundamental premises of Loder's work, and of this dissertation, is that it does catch up with us. Furthermore, it is the pastoral counselor's vocation to enable the parishioner to deal with it.

It is an equally fundamental premise, as should be clear by now, that neither the parishioner nor the pastor

⁶² Macquarrie, Principles, 86.

⁶³ Macquarrie, Principles, 86.

⁶⁴ Macquarrie, Principles, 86-87.

are able to deal with it. By its very definition, it makes the notion of dealing with it laughable. Indeed, it deals with us. Every attempt to imaginatively deal with it ends either in despair or is imaginary, not having fully engaged the reality of the Void. As has been said repeatedly, only the power of the Holy can transform the meaning of the Void for us.

The Holy is, likewise, present to the individual through a felt sense, intuition, mood. And as with the felt sense of the Void, so with the felt sense of the Holy, it is articulated to consciousness through the images composed by the imagination. We will again use Macquarrie to support the position that the experience of Holy Being occurs as a particular instance of what is being called felt sense.

To appreciate Macquarrie's position in this regard it will help to look at how he understands Friedrich Schleiermacher, for not only does Schleiermacher deal extensively with this topic, but also, when defending Schleiermacher, Macquarrie seems to be revealing his own position. In an essay entitled "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," Macquarrie writes an apologetic for Schleiermacher.⁶⁵ The main issue that Macquarrie discusses in this essay is the "relation between feeling and thought"

⁶⁵ John Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," Chap. 14 of Thinking About God (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 157-66.

in Schleiermacher.⁶⁶ In this regard, Macquarrie writes,

In his [Schleiermacher's] view these [thought and feeling] are not sharply separated. Neither are they opposed nor is thought swallowed up in feeling, so that the question of truth or falsity is abrogated. What he calls "feeling," he can call "immediate self-consciousness" and these are close to intuition.⁶⁷

Macquarrie concludes "that for Schleiermacher feeling has definitely a cognitive element."⁶⁸ The parallel here with what is intended by felt sense should be obvious: in both, the feeling is more than simply emotion; a meaning or sense, a cognition, is in the feeling.

Macquarrie then goes on to analyze the relation between thought and feeling in Schleiermacher in a way that corresponds to the relation between reason and faith in Loder's understanding of Kierkegaard. For Schleiermacher, thought cannot grasp the ultimate:

Now this kind of feeling or intuition which is directed toward the infinite is not anything opposed to thought, but might be described as a leap beyond our thinking of particulars in an attempt to know things in their wholeness or totality. It is a kind of mystical vision, arising from the drive toward the whole or the infinite, a drive that is already within us and motivating our thought.⁶⁹

In other words, thought is driven beyond itself in its

⁶⁶ Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," 161.

⁶⁷ Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," 161.

⁶⁸ Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," 161.

⁶⁹ Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," 161-62.

search for the ultimate. Apprehension of the ultimate requires a new mode of knowledge, which is what Schleiermacher meant by feeling. As Macquarrie well says it, "Schleiermacher... stressed feeling as the essence of religion, but he saw feeling (or intuition) as reaching in the same direction as thought, and then completing thought's quest for 'complete vision' when one comes to the limits of thought."⁷⁰ Quoting philosopher Etienne Gilson, Macquarrie then notes, "'The human intellect naturally desires an end that it cannot attain by merely natural means.'"⁷¹ This parallels what was briefly noted in Kierkegaard regarding the fact that reason cannot grasp the paradox, but neither can it let it go. Reason is repeatedly drawn to the paradox, beyond its own limits, "willing its own downfall," and fulfillment, in the bestowal of the paradox in the passion of faith.

Likewise for Schleiermacher, the leap into the new mode of knowledge, i.e., feeling, is made possible, not by human resources, but as a gift. Macquarrie writes, "Yet... it is believed that the leap is made possible by an act of vision, or intuition, granted by the other himself, for it is he who has implanted the drive toward himself in us."⁷²

⁷⁰ Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," 162.

⁷¹ Etienne Gilson, The Spirit of Thomism (New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1964), 57 as quoted in Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," 162.

⁷² Macquarrie, "Schleiermacher Reconsidered," 162-63.

In other words, the experience of the Holy is best characterized in terms of felt sense or feeling. The Holy is known not through reason alone, nor by emotion alone, but in this new mode of knowledge which can only be described as "feeling-thought," or felt sense. Furthermore, this felt sense of the Holy is characterized as the passion, or conviction, of faith. This feeling contains a certain knowledge of God which can no more be denied in the moment of its occurrence than can be the reality of sense experience. This is the immediacy that was spoken of previously under the rubric of transparency before God. What is being added to this position with regard to Schleiermacher and Macquarrie is that this immediacy is best described as a felt sense, as feeling with overwhelming cognitive significance.

As was asserted above, Macquarrie's own position seems to be revealed in his sympathetic treatment of Schleiermacher. For Macquarrie, one's knowledge of Holy Being is attained differently from our knowledge of things in the world insofar as Holy Being is not a thing in the world, but rather the condition that there is anything at all. Knowledge of Holy Being is the felt awareness that one is first known by Holy Being. To know the Holy requires the initiative of the Holy, rather than the intellectual efforts of the human. The reception of this initiative requires a kind of thinking that Macquarrie, now following Heidegger,

calls "primordial."⁷³ Comparing this mode of knowledge with the religious claims of revelation, Macquarrie writes, "What would seem to happen both in the primordial thinking of the philosopher and the revelatory experience of the religious man (if indeed these two can be definitely distinguished) is that the initiative passes to that which is known, so that we are seized by it and it impresses itself upon us."⁷⁴ One is "grasped," as some would say, by Holy Being as it "bestows" itself upon a person in the mode of receptive thought, in which "I am transcended, mastered, and, indeed, known myself."⁷⁵

However, in this receptive mode in which the Holy bestows itself, one is not "transcended" in such a way that one's natural processes of knowing are simply and totally overwhelmed. As was the case in Kierkegaard and St. Paul, so here, one appropriates this being grasped by Being in ways that are meaningful to the person as the individual that he or she is. As Macquarrie says, "The response of appropriation constitutes, indeed, an essential element in the totality of the revelatory experience."⁷⁶ The sequence is the same as that which has been encountered before: the Holy presents itself to the person, and is received, through

⁷³ Macquarrie, Principles, 94-95.

⁷⁴ Macquarrie, Principles, 94.

⁷⁵ Macquarrie, Principles, 94.

⁷⁶ Macquarrie, Principles, 95.

a particular mode of knowing (passion of faith, felt sense, feeling, intuition, primordial thinking); this mode of knowing is further processed, appropriated, through the creative activity of the individual's imagination. The presentation, the felt sense of it, and the imaginative representation of that, are all distinguishable, but inseparable in the total experience of coming to know (one's being known by) the Holy.

A final point in this regard is this. The ways in which one comes to know the Holy, the meaning that the Holy has for an individual, the images that one uses to compose the felt sense of the Holy, will all correspond to the felt existential conflict, drive, question that pertains at the moment. The Holy will be known as the resolution to the existential conflict, as the fulfillment of the innate drive toward knowledge (or meaning, or life, etc.), as the answer to the existential question of the individual. In other words, knowledge of the Holy will be a subject-object synthesis.

In making this point it is again being suggested that the presentation of the Holy is like sense experience in that it is the experience of something which comes to be experienced as something. Clarity is important here lest God be thought of as being a thing in the world, an empirical datum like any other, different only in that it is more spectacular and less explicable than any other. That

is not the point. The point is that the experience of the Holy is an experience of "something" beyond the images and concepts that one uses to express it and beyond the particular empirical event that may be the catalyst or the vehicle of its presentation. This point is made clear in both Macquarrie and Loder.

Macquarrie makes this point clear when he discusses miracle.⁷⁷ A miracle is a signal manifestation of the presence of Being in what is otherwise a publicly observable event. The miracle is not found, however, in the extraordinary nature of the empirical event. What is extraordinary is the opening of the individual, for whom this event is a miracle, to the gracious "letting be" of Being. Being itself is manifest to this individual in this event. The event itself may be observed by a public for whom it is not a miracle. But the miracle itself cannot be observed in that way. The one for whom it is an event of the manifestation of Being participates in it in a way that we have described above as being beyond the subject-object split. This individual is a participant in the miracle, and only so can he/she see it as such. As has been argued above, such an occurrence is not a subjective projection; but, neither is it simply an empirically observable event. It is an encounter with reality that can only be known through participation in it. The individual participant is

⁷⁷ Macquarrie, Principles, 247-53.

grasped in the event by the power of the Holy. The determinative felt sense of the event is that of being grasped by a power beyond anything that could be adequately expressed in proximate, two dimensional terms. As Macquarrie says, "Miracle, like providence or revelation, has the character of ambiguity. From one point of view, the event is seen as a perfectly ordinary event; from another point of view, it is an event that opens up Being and becomes a vehicle for Being's revelation or grace or judgement or address."⁷⁸

Loder makes much the same point when he says, " The Divine Companion or the Presence of the Holy remains Other even though its faces appear in human experience."⁷⁹ In other words, even though the Holy can be presented through mundane events, its character as Holy is not altered because of it. In mundane events, there is an other, the nature of which cannot be adequately expressed in terms that adequately express the nature of these mundane events. Referring to Rudolf Otto, Loder writes, "The 'mysterium tremendum fascinens' as manifest in the earthiness of human existence via the faces of new being retains otherness...."⁸⁰

This Otherness is a crucial aspect of the experience

⁷⁸ Macquarrie, Principles, 250.

⁷⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 89.

⁸⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 89.

and can be referred to as the felt sense of it. When describing an experience of the Holy, one can point to the mundane event(s) that accompanies it, knowing that these aspects of the total event in no way explain, nor are they the essence of, the event as the presentation of the Holy. To begin to adequately describe the truth or essence of the event, one must refer to the (immediacy of the) felt sense of it which is significantly more than that which can be expressed by describing the accompanying empirical data. To truly understand the event as a presentation of the Holy, one must rely on the felt sense of it as experienced by the one for whom it is such an event. The point of this for pastoral counseling is that the counselor must rely on the felt sense of the event for the client in order to appropriately, and not reductively, articulate its meaning. What is more, it is the counselor's task to facilitate the articulation of the felt sense, enabling the client to focus upon it, allowing it to articulate its own meaning, rather than imposing a pre-conceived psychological or theological meaning upon it.

Another way of making this point is to consider the notion of significance. The significance of an event is not observable from the outside, as are the empirical factors of it. Indeed, significance implies participation in the event in a way that is denied to the disinterested observer. Or, to such an observer, the event has relatively little

significance beyond the significance of the empirical factors. For the person involved, however, the significance of the event is more than that which can be described by these factors. Significance is here understood as the felt meaning of the event. In adequately describing the event, the individual must refer to this felt meaning of it, which is in, but beyond, the observable data of it. To repeat, in pastoral counseling, when considering the significance of an event for a client, one must follow the lead of, and rely upon the articulation of, the felt meaning of the event by the client. To do otherwise is to run the risk of distorting the meaning of the event for the client.

Two points need to be emphasized before leaving this discussion of felt sense. First, it needs to be repeated that felt sense involves what is generally understood by affect and cognition. When using the word "feeling," more is meant than simply affect, but not less. That is, affect, or emotion, is a part of the feeling of felt sense. Likewise, it is a felt sense, or felt meaning. That is, as has been insisted upon, there is a cognitive aspect.

Furthermore, both these aspects, affect and cognition, are present in the image that articulates the felt sense. The image is considered to be appropriate in so far as it adequately represents both the affective and the cognitive aspects of it.

This double aspect can be seen in the notion of

conviction. Conviction is more than simply feeling, or affect, but it is not less. Conviction has reasons, but the reasons in and of themselves do not convince anyone. Conviction involves both the mind and the heart, so to speak. It corresponds to the truth in both of the following statements: "The heart cannot believe what the mind knows to be false"; "The heart has reasons that the mind knows not of." The reasons for conviction may not be consciously articulated at any given moment, nevertheless, at some level of psychic awareness, the implicit meaning of the feeling is convincing.

Secondly, felt meaning and its articulation in an image has been presented in that sequence: one references a prior felt sense which is then expressed in an image. Granting the logic of this sequence, nevertheless, it is not absolute. The image may be presented to consciousness first, through which one becomes aware of the felt sense of a situation. This is simply an instance of the dynamic that was noted above with regard to faith and imagination. It may be that one may not notice the felt sense of one's situation until an image brings it to one's attention. Then one awakens to this felt sense that may have been present, and influencing one's behavior, but consciously unnoticed.

Having said that, it needs to be repeated that the felt sense can be referenced prior to the imaginative representation of it. The practical importance of this lies

in the fact that the felt sense provides guidance for the therapeutic process. So often clients arrive with a felt sense of their situation, rather than a detailed explanation of it. Furthering the therapeutic process involves accessing this felt meaning and allowing it to express itself through the client's imaginative processes, assisted by the counselor.

It should be further pointed out that, although Loder does not make this notion of felt sense as explicit as has been done here, he does use it repeatedly and consistently, both in terms of psychotherapeutic and spiritual experience; that is, both in terms of two and four dimensional experience. He frequently refers to the "sense of" this or that, even using the specific phrase, "felt sense." He also refers to Michael Polanyi and the similar concept of "tacit knowledge."⁸¹ As the discussion proceeds, it will be apparent that Gendlin's notion of felt meaning and the expansion of it via Macquarrie, et al. are in line with Loder's thought. This dissertation is simply making more out of it than does Loder.

So much is being made of this idea because of its importance for the model of pastoral counseling proposed here. Because there is a felt meaning in regard to both one's two dimensional and four dimensional situations, the pastoral counselor has a guide in dealing with presenting

⁸¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 30.

problems that may involve such a broad range of issues. By enabling the client to focus on and articulate this felt meaning appropriately, the counselor prepares the ground for resolutions, in so far as the situation involves conflict of some kind.

Before moving on, one final point about the nature of religious experience may be helpful. This point is made because it gives further context for understanding transformation in four dimensions.

John Macquarrie describes two different, but complimentary, forms that religious experience may take. He characterizes these as "negative" and "positive," not intending by that to mean an evaluation of their importance, but simply as a way of describing them.⁸² The negative type is generally the type that we have been discussing in terms of existential anxiety, the underlying condition of estrangement, etc., and its resolution in terms of faith, sense of the presence of God, etc. Macquarrie describes this negative type this way:

The negative type is primarily determined by a sense of fragmentariness of human existence. It takes its rise from the awareness of finitude and even of sinfulness. The human being is believed to be incapable of making sense of his existence or of fulfilling from his own resources the demands which his very existence brings with it--demands for moral rectitude, authentic selfhood and genuine community. It is this profound unease

⁸² See John Macquarrie, In Search of Humanity: A Theological and Philosophical Approach (London: SCM Press, 1982), 207.

or dissatisfaction with one's condition that motivates the religious quest.... It is in the midst of this threat of negativity that some religious persons claim that they have experienced grace and revelation, so that the fragmentariness and contradiction of their lives have been overcome by a power not their own, a power they call "God."⁸³

Macquarrie suggests that Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, Jaspers, St. Paul, Luther, etc. were people who experienced and characterized religion in this way. William James' "twice born" individuals are likewise examples of this type.⁸⁴

The second form, the positive or the affirmative type, is so described because, says Macquarrie, "it seems to arise from the natural desire of the human self to go beyond any given state of itself toward goals that seem to recede indefinitely."⁸⁵ This type characterizes "religious" life as a journey toward ever richer fulfillments of being; one is drawn toward continually transformed possibilities of being. The fragmentariness of the first type "is experienced not so much as threat of absurdity or non-being as rather the unfinished state of humanity.... New possibilities open up ahead, and the pilgrimage has to be pursued towards a goal which is still hidden."⁸⁶ Macquarrie

⁸³ Macquarrie, In Search, 207.

⁸⁴ Macquarrie, In Search, 207-08.

⁸⁵ Macquarrie, In Search, 208.

⁸⁶ Macquarrie, In Search, 208.

notes that St. John the Apostle is a good example of this type of religiosity, or spirituality. Contemporary examples are Karl Rahner and Jurgen Moltmann.

Macquarrie points out that these types seem to fluctuate historically as predominate types, but that they are essentially complimentary.⁸⁷ The writer agrees with this latter point, but would put it a different way. The writer would say that these two different types of religious experience are not primarily different phenomena but two ways of viewing the same phenomena. The transformations of the positive type occur not only as the "natural" drive toward fuller being or transcendence, but as a function of the conflicts enunciated in the negative type. That is, the transcendent movement proceeds via the experiences of existential conflict. Put still another way, the resolutions of the first type are the transformations of the second type. The resolutions of the conflicts of the first type are not merely a return to the pre-conflict experience of undifferentiated harmony, but a positive gain over the condition that pertained prior to the emergence of the conflict.

This synthesis of Macquarrie's two types into a single experience seems to express well the movement of transformation that Loder discusses. A new situation emerges as a result of the experienced conflict and the

⁸⁷ Macquarrie, In Search, 209.

creative drive of the human spirit (in two dimensional experience) and/or the creative activity of the Holy Spirit (in four dimensional experience).

CHAPTER 4

Transformation

This chapter concerns the third piece of the model: the grammar of transformation. This grammar is discussed both in terms of its distinctive steps and its characteristics when considered as a whole. The second diagnostic question with regard to the use of the model is considered in this chapter; namely, "Where in the grammar is the client?" Perhaps it should be mentioned that by calling this question the second question and the previous question the first, the point is not which comes first and which comes second in actual practice. The point is that there are two diagnostic questions that need to be asked in using this model. Their order is irrelevant. However, the third question, which is more a question of treatment than of diagnosis, would, naturally, be the third in the series. That question is taken up in the final chapter.

Meaning of Transformation

The primary resource for this study of Loder is his book, The Transforming Moment. As the title of that work suggests, transformation occurs in a "moment." One might recall Kierkegaard's use of the idea of the "moment" in which the paradox of the God-Human is bestowed, the moment of faith. However, transformation is more than this moment, this leap; it is also the movements that lead up to this moment and the movements that flow from it. In other words,

transformation also involves a process. This is what Loder calls the grammar or logic of transformation.

Before discussing this grammar of transformation it is absolutely crucial that the meaning of transformation itself be made clear. It is not simply change or even positive change. Loder defines transformation this way:

This key term does not merely refer to change in a positive direction, as common usage would suggest. Rather, transformation occurs whenever, within a given frame of reference or experience, hidden orders of coherence and meaning emerge to replace or alter the axioms of the given frame and reorder its elements accordingly.¹

One needs to note the distinction between "frames of reference" and the "axioms of the given frame." Although at times Loder seems to use these phrases interchangeably, and thus confusingly, here it is clear that the former refers to a general context of experience or attention, e.g., cognitive development, while the latter refers to the particular axioms that structure one's experience within that context. In this instance, transformation would not mean the movement from the context of cognitive development to that of, say, emotional development. Rather, transformation would refer to the replacement of the axioms that govern cognitive organization, as when one moves from concrete operational to formal operational thinking, to use an example from Piagetian theory. In transformation, the elements within a given context ("frame of reference") are

¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 229.

rearranged according to a new principle, "axiom," of organization. A new relationship among the elements occurs in which a new whole is constructed.

The similarity between this understanding of transformation and the earlier discussion of the function of the intrapsychic image may be apparent. The image is, or embodies, the mediating principle (axiom) through which two or more elements are related. In other words, the image mediates transformation in so far as it imaginatively composes the new principle of organization for presentation to consciousness.

Further clarity into the meaning of transformation might be gained by considering the work of Paul Watzlawick, John Weakland and Richard Fisch, in particular, their ideas of "first and second order change."² First order change refers to the various changes that occur within a given system. These are changes that occur in accordance with the axioms of the system. Take the mathematical system of addition, for example.³ All the various combinations of numbers that are the result of the axiom of addition fall within this system and are, therefore, first order changes. To change to multiplication would be second order change. Second order change is not change within the system, but

² See Paul Watzlawick, John H. Weakland and Richard Fisch, Change: Principles of Problem Formation and Problem Resolution (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974).

³ Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch, 11.

change of the system. In the example of multiplication the axioms governing the way that the numerical elements may be combined has been changed. Change of the system has occurred.

Another example which highlights an important aspect of this distinction between first and second order change is that of shifting gears in an automobile.⁴ Within a given gear, one can accelerate or decelerate. This would be first order change; it is change within the system of a given gear. It should be noted that the gear determines the range of speed that is possible. One cannot go 55 mph in first gear. In order to expand the range of speed, one must shift gears; that would be second order change. In shifting gears one changes the "axioms" governing the speed of the vehicle. Furthermore, one should note that no matter how far one presses down on the accelerator, one cannot exceed the speed as determined by that gear, nor can one change gears simply by accelerating or decelerating ("automatic" transmission notwithstanding). In other words, first order changes do not, of themselves, issue in second order change.

With Watzlawick's ideas in mind, the discussion can return to Loder's understanding of transformation. It may be apparent that transformation is second order change: it is change of the system, rather than change within it. Transformation is change in the governing axioms of a

⁴ Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch, 9.

system, or frame of reference, to use Loder's words. It is the event in which new "orders of coherence and meaning replace or alter axioms" of the system and "reorder its elements accordingly."

It should be added that what constitutes a system, or frame of reference, is relative. That is, systems are composed of systems, and it depends upon one's perspective what constitutes a system and what constitutes an element of a system. Thus, that which is seen to be second order change (transformation) from one perspective, may be first order change (non-transformative change) from another. This idea is important because Loder speaks of "transformation of transformations."⁵ To understand what he means by that consider the movement through the stages of cognitive development. Movement through these stages can be seen as second order change. When one moves from concrete to formal operational thought, one has changed the axioms that govern cognitive structures. However, when one takes a broader perspective, one can see these changes as being first order changes. Such a broader perspective would be that described by the notions of grounded and ungrounded self, meaning the self grounded in God or the self estranged from God. When viewed from this larger perspective, one could describe cognitive stage changes as first order change because the governing axiom of the self, groundedness or ungroundedness,

⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 4.

remains the same.

This is the same dynamic that was encountered in the first chapter regarding aesthetic mindedness. Movement through the spheres of existence are first order change when viewed from the perspective of the aesthetic mindedness system. That system remains the same in spite of the changes within it. However, when viewed from the perspective of the ethical sphere, for example, movement to the religious sphere is second order change insofar as the governing principle of existence can be said to be religious rather than ethical.

When considering the related dialectic of imagination and faith, the dynamic is the same. It could be said that the imagination is the source of second order change, for it does construct novel configurations of elements, organizing them under new axioms. However, as was said, the imagination cannot change the existential condition. Consequently, from the perspective of the existential condition, all imaginative constructions are first order changes, and are not transformative in an existential sense. This is true even though, to repeat, within a given existential condition, such imaginative constructions may be considered transformative in so far as new orders of coherence are presented.

Perhaps one can begin to see how Loder can speak of transformation of transformations. He is referring to the

transformation of the self--from being estranged to being grounded in God. Because of this transformation, all transformations of the self, those which issue from the self, are themselves transformed. The self comes under a new principle of organization, so to speak, which is, in the Christian frame of reference of this work, that of "the principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2, my translation). Consequently, the transformations of that self are thereby transformed. Relating this to Loder's anthropology, one could say that two dimensional transformations, which are the product of the imaginative activity of the self, are transformed under the impact of four dimensional transformation. These two dimensional transformations begin to reflect the transformed self.

In order to be clear, it is important to stress that Loder is not saying that God directly overrides the transformations of the human spirit. The human capacities and freedoms to creatively compose a two dimensional world are not cancelled by four dimensional transformation. Rather, these capacities and freedoms now serve a new principle, the principle of life in the Spirit, which has transformed the human ego from self groundedness to groundedness in God. Not spiritual tyranny, but freedom under a new principle is the consequence of four dimensional transformation. Loder writes, "In this the Holy Spirit as 'Spiritus Creator,' whose mission begins and ends in the

inner life of God, transforms the human ego--and by implication, then, all human transformations which issue from the ego are themselves 'transformed.'"⁶

One might further illustrate this dynamic by considering St. Paul's distinction between "life according to the flesh" and "life according to the Spirit." Generally following the expositions of Rudolph Bultmann, we can fairly characterize these two designations as organizing principles of life.⁷ When one lives according to the flesh, one has one's existence determined by, organized in accord with, the purely human. In such an instance, the flesh can be said to be a system of living which is governed by the axioms of the human, the empirical, that which is disposable by human beings as such.

There may be changes within this system which, although significant, do not change the system; the governing axioms remain the same, i.e., first order changes. For example, legalism and licentiousness, although significantly different in themselves, nevertheless manifest the same governing principle of life according to the flesh, which could be stated as: fulfillment of life is an achievement based solely upon human resources. It is irrelevant, from a systems view, whether this principle is expressed in terms

⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 4.

⁷ See Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, vol. 1, trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1951), 232-46, 314-52.

of the human capacity for legalistic self denial or for licentious self indulgence. Such differences represent first order changes and are not transformative, from the perspective of life in the Spirit.

To live according to the Spirit is to live primarily out of the resources of God in Christ. It is to live by, according to the principle of, faith in Christ. It is to allow the axiom, the principle, of life in the Spirit to direct and organize one's life. Movement from life according to the flesh to life according to the Spirit is second order change, or transformation. It involves a radical change in which one no longer lives solely by means of human resources and abilities, but by the resources, graces, promises, presence of God in Christ as present through the Spirit, i.e., to live by faith. From this perspective, all other changes are first order change and are not transformative.

This, of course, does not mean that one's human nature is abrogated; rather, one's human nature becomes expressive of the intentions of the Spirit. The felt sense of the principle of life in the Spirit is imaginatively expressed within the two dimensions of self-world. While still "in the flesh" (human nature), one aims to "glorify God in the body" (1 Cor. 6:20, RSV).

When it is said that faith is, or issues in, four dimensional transformation, that does not mean that all of

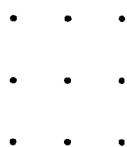
one's life comes to reflect that transformation immediately. What is meant is that through faith the new principle of life in the Spirit is introduced. Although it is apparent in that moment that this new principle of life is applicable to all life, that does not mean that all of one's life immediately conforms to that principle. Such conformation requires the disciplines that generally fall under the rubric of the spiritual life, or sanctification. In the traditional language of Protestantism the introduction of the new principle of life in the Spirit, of faith, can be said to be justification; the working out of that new principle in the various aspects of one's life can be said to be sanctification. All the elements of one's life do not immediately conform to the new principle and the implications of justification by faith alone, but it is clear in the moment of justification that this new principle does, in fact, apply to all these elements.

Grammar of Transformation

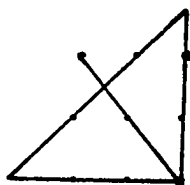
Having discussed the meaning of transformation, it is time to look at the process of transformation. As was said, Loder refers to this process as the logic or the grammar of transformation in order to indicate that it operates in various contexts, it structures the language of change.

Loder begins his discussion of the grammar with a puzzle. The puzzle involves the configuration of nine dots on paper and the instructions to connect all the dots with

four straight lines without lifting the pencil from the paper. The dots are arranged like this:⁸



A point to note in this arrangement of the dots is that it implicitly frames the problem and, so, limits the possible solutions. One infers from this particular arrangement of the dots that the lines that connect them must fit within the square outline of the dots, although this is not mentioned in the instructions. In fact, this inference makes the solution impossible. One must leap out of this limiting understanding of the rules governing the attempted solutions in order to solve the puzzle. It is solved like this:⁹



Loder points out that the insight into the puzzle's solution comes "imaginatively through a mental reversal of figure and ground; that is, a reversal of the relationship between the lines and the dots. Instead of assimilating the four lines to the nine dots, you will break out of the set within which the puzzle was framed and assimilate the nine

⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 35.

⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 36.

dots to the four lines...."¹⁰ In this imaginative insight one has transformed the conflicting elements of the puzzle and gained knowledge of its resolution. This is the imaginative construction of knowledge which is the resolution of conflict.

It may be apparent that this is second order change: the governing axiom of the attempted solution has been replaced. The solution was previously attempted under the axiom that the four lines must fit the square arrangement of the dots. All the various combinations of lines that were governed by this axiom were first order changes, and none of them could solve the puzzle. To solve the puzzle, a change in the axiom that governed the attempted solution was necessary. This is second order change or transformation. It must be emphasized that this axiom that governed the attempted solutions precluded a solution. Unless and until there was change at this level, the solution could never be attained.

The importance of this dynamic cannot be overemphasized. The conflicts that Loder is concerned about are those that require this kind of change for resolution. The rules by which the elements of the conflict are related preclude a resolution. They must be replaced if a resolution is to be found. There are, of course, conflicts which can be resolved without changing the organizing

¹⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 36.

principle of the system. In such cases, "more of the same" first order changes may eventually accomplish the desired result.¹¹ These are not the conflicts that require transformation and are not the concern of this dissertation.

The interests here are with conflicts that require transformation for their resolution, whether these conflicts are two dimensional and are resolved by creative leaps of the imagination, or are four dimensional, requiring the new principle of life in the Spirit for their resolution. In either case, what is required is the emergence of new axioms for organizing the given elements in the conflict.

It should be made clear that it is not the nature of the elements themselves that create the conflict so much as it is their relationship. It is a change in the relationship that constitutes the resolution. This emergence of new axioms whereby the elements are related differently is one step in the total process of transformation. These steps will now be considered in their logical, but not absolute, sequence.

Conflict

The first step in the grammar of transformation is the conflict.¹² This step has just been discussed somewhat, when contending that the kind of conflicts that are being considered are those that require transformation for their

¹¹ Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch, chap. 3.

¹² Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

resolution. There are other aspects of this step that must be briefly stated.

The conflict occurs within an assumptive world, or context, as it was called above.¹³ This assumptive world makes it the conflict that it is. Note, for example, that the nine dot puzzle is located on a flat piece of paper. That assumptive world, if one may call it that, affects what the puzzle is. On a curved piece of paper the puzzle would be significantly different.¹⁴

One should note the difference between the assumptive world and the assumptions that govern a given conflict within that world, and how change in one is related to the other. Change of the assumptions governing an attempted solution within a given assumptive world will not, of itself, effect change of that world. For example, the flat piece of paper, the assumptive world, is not changed when one changes the assumptions governing the attempted solutions of the puzzle. On the other hand, change of the assumptive world is likely to effect the assumptions governing the solutions precisely because the assumptive world is largely determinative for the meaning of the conflict.

This distinction is an instance of the point that was made above regarding the relative nature of systems and the

¹³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

¹⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

subsequent meaning of first and second order change. Within (the system of) a given assumptive world, the assumptions governing solutions to a conflict may be seen as elements of the system; whereas, from the perspective of the given conflict these same assumptions are the axioms that govern the system that is conflicted, and which may be precluding its resolution. One may extend this argument and note that the meaning of first and second order change is effected accordingly: from the perspective of the assumptive world, change in the assumptions governing the conflict are first order change (because the axioms governing the given assumptive world remain the same); however, from the perspective of the conflict itself, change in its governing assumptions is second order change.

These rather tedious observations are relevant for counseling when one considers that the assumptive world of the client defines, in large part, the nature of the conflict. A change in the assumptive world will, therefore, have an effect on the conflict as experienced by the client. This is particularly noteworthy for pastoral counseling. For example, four dimensional transformation effects a change in the client's assumptive world, which in turn affects the client's experiencing of a given set of circumstances as the conflict that it is. Moreover, as Loder points out, one may create new conflicts by such a transformation, as when the flat piece of paper becomes

curved, a new puzzle is created.

Moving on to other considerations of the conflict step, Loder makes the fairly obvious point that the conflict must be important to the individual in order to evoke sufficient energy and attention to resolve it.¹⁵ Given the fact that the conflicts that are the concern of this dissertation involve an impasse, and require a significant reorganization for resolution, one would tend to ignore them when possible. One must care significantly about the conflict in order to endure, so to speak, the process of its resolution. As Loder says, "one cannot come to know what one does not care about."¹⁶ What is more, he says, "The more one cares about the conflict the more powerful will be the knowing event."¹⁷

If one has had the not too pleasant experience of counseling someone who does not want to be in therapy, but is there only at the insistence of a third party (court, spouse, parent), one can appreciate the significance of this observation. The counseling process will be retarded if the person is not engaged by, does not care about, the conflict, for it is the person's own interest that moves the process.

Furthermore, these conflicts that require transformation for resolution, and which involve areas that one is personally concerned about, are not easily

¹⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

¹⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

¹⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

articulated. The combination of their perplexing character and one's emotional involvement in them makes it difficult to fully or accurately delineate their elements and their relationship, in customary terms. In fact, since the conflict by definition calls into question the adequacy of one's habitual ways of organizing the elements, to articulate the conflict in customary terms tends to distort its true nature. One senses or feels or intuitively that the conflict is more than that which can be framed in a customary manner. This can be frustrating, particularly when someone, oneself or a helper, insists on reducing the felt sense of the conflict to a theory. One knows that this theoretical interpretation does not exhaust or even express the nature of the conflict, and yet one does not have a better theory to replace the one offered.

This is essentially the critique that Loder makes regarding the process of problem solving proposed by John Dewey and supported by Jean Piaget.¹⁸ The second step in Dewey's model is, according to Loder, that "there must be a rational formulation of the problem."¹⁹ Dewey said that eventually the sense of the problem has to be "intellectualized" and then one can know what has to be

¹⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 44-47.

¹⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 44.

solved.²⁰ From this intellectualized formulation of the problem one works toward a solution that fits this particular formulation. Loder concludes, "Thus, the solution is always to the problem as 'intellectualized' within some known frame of reference; it is not a solution to the problem as 'felt' or 'intuited.'"²¹

As long as the problem is adequately expressed in one's "known frames of reference" (axioms of organization), there is no problem, says Loder. Or, as Watzlawick might say, as long as the problem can be solved by first order change, then Dewey's paradigm for problem solving is acceptable. However, it is when the problem is greater than, or other than, one's habitual axioms of understanding that this paradigm is deficient, for it will inevitably distort the problem so that it fits these axioms. As Loder says, "In actuality one's sense of the problem tends to be cut down or trained to fit what can be intellectualized. Thus, what can be known as true cannot be greater or exceed the boundaries of formal operational intelligence [alluding to Piaget] as applied with established frames of reference."²² Such a procedure, says Loder, "is a distillation that eclipses the imaginative aspect of thinking in order to eliminate as much

²⁰ See John Dewey, How We Think (New York: Heath, 1933), 106-18; cited in Loder, Transforming Moment, 44.

²¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 45.

²² Loder, Transforming Moment, 46.

discontinuity as possible. The consequence is that the transformational aspect of knowing is sacrificed to the technical need for consistency in performance and conformity to known frames of reference."²³

One should particularly note in this discussion of the conflict how often Loder refers to that which has been called felt sense. Here its importance for appropriately articulating the problem to be solved is clear.

Loder goes on to say, in defense of Dewey and Piaget, that their actual practice was different than their theory. In their own work they followed more the paradigm that Loder presents than their own. Loder says, "Dewey and Piaget have both created knowledge with immense intuitive genius; they themselves have taken bold imaginative leaps that characterize the knowing event."²⁴

Ironically, something of the same critique may be aimed at Loder. As will be clear in the analysis of the grammar of transformation within the context of therapy, Loder verges on the same error that he criticizes in Dewey and Piaget, namely, the intellectualization of the problem in terms of known axioms of organization. There it will be seen that "the rational capacities and judgements of the therapist"²⁵ are used to interpret the conflict of the

²³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 46.

²⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 47.

²⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

client. To what extent this is the same as intellectualization, and how it might be avoided, will be discussed more fully then. There is, however, a related area that should be discussed now regarding the articulation of the conflict.

Loder makes the point in Religious Pathology and Christian Faith that the conflict which is resolved in the imaginative leap is the one that is articulated; and it is resolved in terms of its articulation.²⁶ This is not necessarily the same as intellectualization, for a given articulation may adequately reflect the felt meaning of the conflict. The point here is that the resolution does not add to the elements of the articulated conflict, but is a recombination of these elements into a new relationship under a new organizing principle. Consequently, in Loder's scheme it is crucial that the conflict be articulated in ways that correspond to the felt sense of it, rather than distorting it to fit known axioms of organization. This means following the lead of the client's felt sense of his\her situation.

Recalling the previous discussion for an example, the God-Human is a resolution of the existential conflict as articulated in terms of the polarity of finite and infinite, a polarity that is consciously experienced and articulated as one moves through the spheres of existence.

²⁶ Loder, Religious Pathology, 191-92.

This is also true for the Freudian case of "Little Hans" that Loder refers to frequently.²⁷ Little Hans was a five year old boy who was threatened with castration by his mother after she found him masturbating. He, understandably, developed bizarre behaviors as a result of this encounter. These behaviors were subsequently articulated, under Freud's guidance, in terms of the Oedipal drama. And it was in these terms that the imaginative resolution emerged in Hans' dreams.

The point here is two-fold. First, the proper resolution of a conflict requires adequate articulation and differentiation of the elements involved in it. For, and this is the second aspect, the imaginative resolution will be precisely of these differentiated elements. The corollary is that if the articulation and differentiation of these elements is not adequate, if the felt conflict is greater than or other than the articulated one, the resolution will be a false one.

The importance of this observation for the pastoral counseling which involves helping with two and four dimensional conflicts should be noted. Articulation of two dimensional conflicts in terms of four and vice versa prepares one for a pseudo-resolution rather than an authentic one. This is similar to the point that Tillich

²⁷ See Loder, Religious Pathology, 184-85; Transforming Moment, 132-35; and "Creativity In and Beyond Human Development."

made some time ago in The Courage To Be. There Tillich draws the theoretical distinction between, and points to the practical importance of recognizing, the distinction between neurotic and existential anxiety.²⁸ It is a mistake, claims Tillich, to confuse the two sources of anxiety, for the resources for healing are different in each case. Tillich illustrates his point by stating that the physician as physician (i.e., psychotherapist) cannot heal existential anxiety and, consequently, should learn to recognize this limitation. The same may be said for the priest. As priest he or she is authorized to address existential anxiety, but must recognize neurotic anxiety as being the appropriate domain of the healing arts of the physician, i.e., one trained in psychotherapy.

One may notice that pastoral counseling has evolved to include, to a certain extent, the tasks of both the physician and the priest. Tillich would seem to allow for such a convergence of tasks in one person as long as one maintains, recognizes, and treats these different forms of anxiety in ways appropriate to their natures. This is precisely the aim of the model that is being constructed in this dissertation.

It is obviously crucial that the conflict that is articulated be the one that is actually felt by the client, rather than a distortion of it in terms of a pre-established

²⁸ Tillich, Courage to Be, 70-78, 223-27.

theory (intellectualization). It will be argued that the most likely approach for accomplishing this task is the client-centered one, where the emphasis is, obviously, centered in the client's own experiencing. More will be said about this later.

A further distinction that Loder makes in reference to the conflict of Little Hans should be mentioned: the "precipitating" conflict and the "basic" conflict.²⁹ The exact words are unimportant, but the phenomenon behind them is. In the case of Little Hans, the precipitating conflict was his bizarre behavior following his mother's threats. The basic conflict was the Oedipal conflict. Once the basic conflict was resolved through his dream images, then the precipitating conflict, which was based upon it, likewise disappeared. Please note, however, that this imaginative resolution occurred only after the basic conflict was articulated appropriately.

When considering this dynamic from a four dimensional perspective, one should note that the precipitating conflict may be two dimensional, while the basic conflict is four dimensional. As in Tillich's dialectic, neurotic anxiety may have its origin in existential anxiety.

The final point to be drawn from Loder regarding the conflict step of the grammar is the rather obvious one that

²⁹ Loder, Religious Pathology, 189.

it "initiates the knowing response."³⁰ Although this is not always the case, logically and usually it is. The conflict begins the process of resolving the conflict! The reason that this is noteworthy is that it suggests a particular meaning to any given conflict: the conflict can be seen not simply as something negative to be avoided, but as the precursor to the creation of new knowledge.

The notion that conflicts initiate a response that ends (or at least may end) in the creation of new knowledge is a common one. One should note in particular the prevalence of this view among developmental psychologists, since Loder discusses his theory in relation to the course of normal human development. It is a common assumption among developmentalists that development begins with a disequilibrium in/of the current developmental stage. The movement toward a new balance begins with the unbalancing of the current balance. The disequilibrium is the precursor to a more complex and sophisticated equilibrium, or organization, of a particular activity, whether it be cognitive, psychosocial, etc.

The experience of conflict that leads to a gain over the pre-conflict balance leads also to hope. As will be elaborated below, the grammar of transformation is transferable to various contexts and dimensions. The experience of transformative resolution of conflict in one

³⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

context tends to create positive expectancy that conflicts in other contexts may have similar results. Consequently, a given conflict need not be framed simply as a problem to be gotten rid of, but as an opportunity for growth and development. Of course, this need not necessarily be the case. Conflicts can be overwhelming and provide occasion for regression and breakdown rather than growth and breakthrough. This possibility of breakdown will return when we discuss the application of the grammar to the specific context of therapy and the value of rapport with the therapist in lessening the overwhelming character of some conflicts.

Interlude for Scanning

The second step in the grammar is the "interlude for scanning."³¹ This is the phase in which one steps back, so to speak, from the articulated conflict, and looks at it from various angles and considers related aspects of it, as well as tracing out the various associations that may emerge. In the older schemes of the creative process (which is essentially what this process is), this is the incubation or preparatory period that proceeds, and seems to provoke, the inventive discovery.³²

³¹ See Loder, Transforming Moment, 37-38; and "Creativity," 219.

³² C. Daniel Bateson and W. Larry Ventis, The Religious Experience: A Social-Psychological Perspective (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 77-78.

From a purely logical point of view, two seemingly contradictory movements occur in this step: on the one hand, the conflict is, or seems to be, forgotten, or put out of mind; on the other, this is the phase when one imagines possible solutions, follows hunches regarding its possible resolution, etc. One might well ask how one can search for a resolution to a conflict that one has forgotten.

Surely though, this is a common occurrence; and the answer to the question is that one has not totally put the conflict out of mind: the conflict as such is no longer the focus of conscious attention. Unconscious mental activity still holds the articulated conflict in mind, and, in fact, is actively pursuing solutions. One's conscious attention is merely diverted from the conflict as such. This diverted attention constitutes the interlude. During this time, scanning of the psychic terrain occurs. Loder writes "This is the step of waiting, wondering, following hunches, and exhausting the possibilities."³³

Loder says that this is a step which includes "indwelling the conflicted situation with empathy for the problem and its parts."³⁴ He also refers to it as a time for "differentiating the terms of the problem."³⁵ Within a therapeutic context this means that one focuses on the felt

³³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

³⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

³⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 37.

sense of the conflict, articulating it in terms of its various aspects. This step is an analytic movement in so far as the various elements of the conflicted situation, or system, are broken apart from the whole and from each other. In this process one attempts to grasp the integrity, or nature, of the elements themselves, "empathically indwelling" them, as Loder says. Simultaneously, one begins to imagine the possibility of these elements being arranged differently. That which holds them in a particular configuration, the axioms governing their organization, are recognized as being changeable rather than absolute. In this way the seed is planted for the imaginative leap of the novel configuration in the third step.

In fact, one may articulate these axioms as being a part of the conflicted situation. That is, one may name these axioms in an effort to clarify the fact that the conflict is a conflicted arrangement, and to suggest the obvious (to those not bound up in the conflicted arrangement) possibility that the elements may be arranged otherwise. This may, furthermore, direct the therapeutic discussion toward the origins of and motivation for retaining the axioms of the conflicted arrangement. For example, one's "invisible loyalties" to one's family of origin may be a powerful motivation for retaining an

ineffective axiom of organization.³⁶

It is important to emphasize that this emphatic indwelling involves affect as well as cognition. One senses or feels the nature of the elements by indwelling them as well as rationally thinking about them. In this respect, the client's feeling takes the lead over the counselor's rational interpretations. Without this affective feel for the nature of the elements, the theoretical interpretations may significantly distort their true meaning and significance. Of course, this feeling needs the searching light of rational thought, lest it become simply imaginary; nevertheless, the primary datum is always the felt sense of the client.

In addition, the links between the precipitating and the basic conflict that we mentioned above may emerge in this step of the process. Loder writes, "It is this step... that leads into fuller or more comprehensive implications of the conflict and accordingly searches out the solution in the most universal terms."³⁷ That is, in this step the precipitating conflict may be associated with a more basic conflict. Consequently, the articulation of the conflict (step 1) may need to be revised. By articulating the

³⁶ See Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and Barbara R. Krasner, Between Give and Take: A Clinical Guide to Contextual Therapy (New York: Brunner/Mazel Publishers, 1986) for a discussion of the notion of invisible loyalties.

³⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

conflict in its most comprehensive terms a more comprehensive resolution is prepared.

Insight or Constructive Act of the Imagination

The third step is essentially what was introduced in the first chapter: the creative leap of the imagination.³⁸ When considered in sequence as the third step, it can be seen that the first two steps are preparatory and the following two steps are expressive and explanatory of this step.

Loder succinctly summarizes this step when he says, "The insight that works creatively integrates the disarray of the confusing elements of the conflict not by repression, elimination or habitual response, but by coming up with a new point of view."³⁹ As has been frequently said, this step is an organization, an arrangement, an integration of the elements which compose the conflict in such a way that their conflicted arrangement (based upon the organizing axioms of the system) is transformed and a new relationship is created, that is, the (cognitive/affective) axioms of the situation's organization are altered or replaced, and a new system emerges.

Loder frequently refers to Arthur Koestler's term

³⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

³⁹ Loder, "Creativity," 220.

"bisociation" as a way of understanding this step.⁴⁰ By bisociation Koestler means, as Loder says it, "two habitually incompatible frames of reference converging, usually with surprising suddenness, to compose a meaningful unity."⁴¹ These are the connections made by the imagination, which is to say that they are not habitual connections; they are novel ones. Were the connections merely habitual, the change would not be transformative. It would be an instance of first order change rather than second order change. Transformation is needed precisely when the habitual ways of dealing with conflicts no longer produce the desired result.

However, there is no guarantee that these will not be imaginary rather than imaginative. Imaginative resolutions are grounded in the pole of facticity, as determined in the preceding steps. As Loder says it, "The range and the depth of possibilities is controlled by the contextual situation, the shape of the original conflict, and its implications as ferreted out in the preliminary scanning interlude."⁴² These factors create the "facts" of the situation in terms of which possibilities are considered to be imaginative rather than imaginary.

⁴⁰ See Loder, Transforming Moment, 38. For a discussion of bisociation see Arthur Koestler, The Act of Creation (London: Penguin Books, 1964).

⁴¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

⁴² Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

The imaginative insight that is attained through the bisociative movement emerges not only spontaneously, but also with "convincing force, and conveys in a form readily available to consciousness the essence of the resolution."⁴³ One may recall from Loder's discussion of Freud that the hypnagogic image has the power to resolve problems that were previously perplexing the conscious mind. This is essentially what Loder is restating here. One might highlight the fact that the insight, or image, emerges with convincing force, meaning that one is convinced of its aptness in the moment of its emergence, prior to rationally working out the connections analytically. Furthermore, Loder comments that in such an event, "an insight, intuition or vision appears on the border between the conscious and the unconscious."⁴⁴ One should note again the general way that he refers to the constructive leap as insight, intuition, vision. These, of course, are not identical, but have in common the medium of the imagination. In addition, one should note the fact that this imaginative construction emerges on the border between the conscious and the unconscious, suggesting that it mediates between these two realms of psychic life. It might be suggested that the function of the conscious is to search out the elements of the conflict, while the "creative unconscious" supplies the

⁴³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

⁴⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

novel arrangement which is the resolution. This undoubtedly over simplifies the issue, but the point is that the imaginative construct is able to communicate the message of the unconscious in a language that can be appropriated by the conscious mind. The image, as Loder says, "appears on the border of conscious and unconscious"; it mediates between the two.

This middle step is the turning point of the process. It was said above that the first two steps are preparatory and the final two steps are expressive and explanatory. The middle step is the hinge upon which the logic turns. Loder writes,

It is the third step, the construction of insight sensed with convicting force, that constitutes the turning point in the knowing event. It is by this central act that the elements of the ruptured situation are transformed and a new perception, perspective,⁴⁵ or world view is bestowed on the knower.

One may recognize the word "bestowed" from the discussion in the first chapter. It previously appeared in reference to Kierkegaard and the "bestowal" of the paradox of the God-Human and the new condition of faith. Here it is not used so exclusively. Rather, it is used more generally to refer to the gift-like character of the integrating image. This seemingly insignificant point is relevant because a resolution originating from the creative unconscious has a gift-like character to it vis-a-vis

⁴⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38.

consciousness as does a resolution which faith affirms as originating in God.

Related to this gift-like character of the insight is its unpredictability. The essence of the imaginative leap is discontinuity. Although it mediates, it does so in a way that cannot be manufactured or predicted. Says Loder, "No matter how one searches with penetrating conscious analysis to make logically tight connections, the insightful resolution is always a gift that takes awareness by surprise."⁴⁶ This observation is important for determining the method that is appropriate for adopting Loder's scheme. Those therapeutic methods that direct the client toward a particular resolution and devise strategic interventions to this end are not congenial to Loder's thought here. Those therapies that tend to control the mystery of the leap and eliminate its unpredictability and gift-like character are not able to appropriate Loder in this respect.

For example, one might critique Watzlawick et al. in this regard. The therapy advocated by Watzlawick and his associates is one that is more therapist-centered than client-centered. That is, the therapist devises strategies for inducing second order change in the client.⁴⁷ Though

⁴⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 41.

⁴⁷ Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch, 23-24. See also Paul Watzlawick, Janet Helmit, Beavin and Don D. Jackson, Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967), 235-36, 270-71.

one cannot fault this approach as such, it does seem to have the practical effect of simply moving the locus of the creative leap from the client to the therapist. The therapist's imagination, rather than the client's, composes the resolution for the client; the therapist's task then is simply to devise a way for the client to accept it. This approach is contrary to the intent of the grammar, as Loder describes it.

Before leaving this step, something needs to be repeated for emphasis that was said before and which has been implicit throughout. The mediating image does not add to the elements of the conflict. The image is the relationship among them and is of a different order than the elements themselves. As Loder says,

But the image adds nothing which was not present in consciousness prior to the conflict; the feeling state, memories... combine with cognitive and perceptual images to present an intrinsically novel composition of symbols.... In the craftsmanship of the symbolic composition, i.e., in the arrangement, lies the novelty, i.e., the solution; the substance is inevitably familiar.⁴⁸

However, there is a single instance when this rule applies in a unique way. As will be discussed further when the Emmaus Story is used as an illustration of four dimensional transformation, Jesus can at one moment be considered to be one element among others, and at another moment, be seen to be the relationship among them. In the

⁴⁸ Loder, Religious Pathology, 191.

transforming moment, he ceases to be simply one element among many, and becomes the light in which all the elements are seen anew. One may explain this phenomenon from different angles. For example, the Logos is the ordering principle of the cosmos (given the Stoic view), or, in other words, the principle of relationship among the elements of the cosmos. When the "Word [Logos] became flesh," we have a unique instance of the principle of relationship also being one of the elements. Another way to see this is in terms of the historical Jesus becoming present to his disciples through the Holy Spirit after his resurrection. Although not identical with Jesus, nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus. In a sense the Spirit replaces the historical Jesus and is the ordering principle of life for Christians. In this sense, an element, the historical Jesus, has become the manner in which all the elements of life are ordered for those walking in the Christian way. Furthermore, this dynamic is operative in the proclamation of the church in which a new element, Christ as proclaimed, is added to the existing elements of one's life situation. However, this new element (Christ) transforms one's life only when "it" becomes more than one element among others, and becomes the principle for relating all the others.

Now, the final two steps will be considered. These steps tend to be minimized because the integration of the conflicted elements is the critical juncture of the process;

however, for the process to be complete the final steps are necessary.

Release and Transcendence⁴⁹

The fourth step has two aspects to it. The first is the release of energy that was bound up with the conflicted arrangement of the elements. "When these elements come together in the insight," says Loder, "energy is released just as when a chemical reaction takes place creating a more stable molecule at the expense of loss of energy."⁵⁰

If this release of energy, the "aha" experience, does not occur, then it may be concluded that the focused conflict has not been properly resolved. Loder notes, "The principle is that if release fails to appear, then it is evident that the conscious conflict was not the one resolved by the emergent image."⁵¹ On the positive side, he writes, "The release of energy is a response of the unconscious to the resolution and the evidence that one's personal investment in the event has reached a conclusion; the conflict is over."⁵²

The second aspect is an expansion of consciousness. This includes not simply the knowledge gained as the resolution of the conflict, but related matters as well.

⁴⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 38-39.

⁵⁰ Loder, "Creativity," 220.

⁵¹ Loder, Religious Pathology, 193.

⁵² Loder, Transforming Moment, 39.

Consciousness is freed from the conflict and for further awareness. In regard to the nine dot puzzle, Loder writes,

We mean not only that now consciousness has expanded to include the puzzle, its solution and us as its solver, but also that we are able to be more fully aware of new elements in our context now that the matter has been resolved. In fact, it is often the case that solution will come in with a wave of related new associations, carrying the implications further than the original conflict suggested and thereby immersing the knower more deeply than ever in his or her assumptional world.⁵³

Because one is drawn further into the empirical reality of his/her world, one can assert that the resolution is imaginative rather than imaginary.

Interpretation

The final step is that of verification or interpretation.⁵⁴ In this step the knowledge present in the image is elaborated in terms of the conflict and in terms of public knowledge. The essentially personal knowledge contained in the image is demonstrated publicly to be the resolution to the articulated conflict. This step consists of what Loder calls "congruence" and "correspondence."

Congruence refers to the demonstration that the imaginative solution fits the shape of the conflict as articulated. Again referring to the nine dot puzzle, Loder remarks, "this [congruence] makes explicit, congruent connections from the essential structures of the imaginative

⁵³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 39.

⁵⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 39-40.

construct back into the original conditions of the puzzle." This is to verify "whether, in fact, the resolution is what it feels like."⁵⁵

Correspondence refers to making these congruences between the image and conflict a matter of public knowledge. This way the knowledge gained in the personal image becomes accessible to others. One must beware, however, warns Loder that this aspect of this step not dilute the newness of the knowledge gained in the resolution.⁵⁶ That is to say, the knowledge gained may entail alterations of the public assumptions regarding a world view or the manner in which a given conflict is to be resolved. Nevertheless, one is motivated by the power of the resolution itself to make public the knowledge gained in it. This is even more the case when the knowledge entails the revising of well established and cherished "facts" that form the consensual public world, although it may entail further and perhaps more intense public and personal conflicts, as the history of many reformers amply demonstrates.

The Grammar as a Whole

To this point the nature of transformation and the steps in the grammar of it has been discussed. The grammar needs now to be considered as a whole.

The first point is that the grammar is a whole, or as

⁵⁵ Loder, "Creativity," 220-21.

⁵⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 40.

Loder refers to it, a "linear gestalt."⁵⁷ Once the process is engaged, there is an inherent movement toward completion. For example, there would be a decided sense of incompleteness even after the resolving image has emerged if the interpretation step is not taken. Until one interprets the image in terms of the conflict in a publicly understandable way, the process is unfinished, and will feel like it. This is the continuity aspect of the grammar in contrast to the discontinuity aspect mentioned above in reference to the unpredictability of the leap in the third step.

Related to this gestalt quality of the grammar is the fact that one may enter the process at any one of the steps.⁵⁸ Although the normal procedure would be to begin with the conflict, one may in fact begin with the resolution. One might experience an insight that has a powerful and compelling effect such that one knows that one knows; but, one does not know precisely what it is that one knows. In other words, one has received an answer to a question before one has formulated the question. Loder cites as an example graduate students who know the truth that they wish to demonstrate in their dissertations, but they do not know exactly what the problem is to which this

⁵⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 40.

⁵⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 42-43.

truth is the solution.⁵⁹

Loder makes the pertinent point that such a sequence in which the resolution precedes the articulation of the conflict is common in convictional experiences,⁶⁰ that is, in four dimensional transformations. For Christians, often these are powerful instances of the presence and reality of Christ as "the answer," but the one convicted does not fully know at that moment how Christ is the answer, nor to what question(s). The point is that if one enters the process at this "middle step" of resolution, then, as Loder says, "transformational logic will preserve the continuity of the sequence and draw the knower backward into generative conflict and forward into the final stage of interpretation."⁶¹

This may strike one as odd in light of what was said above about the necessity of fully articulating the elements of the conflict as preparation for their resolution. Perhaps precision is in order here. When the sequence is such that the conflict emerges first, then appropriate differentiation and articulation of the elements is preparatory for resolution. However, when the resolution emerges first, then, in order for the gestalt quality of the logic to be realized, this articulation of the corresponding

⁵⁹ Loder, "Creativity," 221.

⁶⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 42-43.

⁶¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 42.

conflict is necessary. The appropriate articulation of the conflicted elements is necessary in either case.

Of course, one need not enter the process at either the resolution or the conflict step, but may enter at any of the steps. Each step will present the same characteristics regardless of the sequence, and there will be a movement toward engaging the other steps, thus completing the logic.

The logic has another characteristic that strikes one as being an instance of what Piaget would refer to as a "scheme."⁶² Loder does not refer to it in this way, but the term does fit what Loder is describing. A scheme is a structure through which "adaptation" occurs through the process of "accommodation" and "assimilation." In this process of adapting to the environment, the internal structure for knowing changes to meet the particular shape of the environment, and shapes the environment to fit its particular structure. The logic of transformation is such a scheme which is shaped by and shapes particular contents of various environments.

To say that the logic is shaped by particular contents does not mean that it loses its integrity and is no longer recognizable as such; rather, it is to say that it is flexible enough to adequately structure a wide variety of contents. Likewise, this is not say that these contents are

⁶² See John H. Flavell, The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1963), 44-45.

thereby misshapen, but that they can be organized into a meaningful shape.

This is perhaps a more complicated than necessary way to introduce what Loder calls "transposition" of the grammar of transformation. Loder defines transposition this way:

The spontaneous appearance and recognition of a patterned unit of behavior in a variety of different contexts. Specifically the patterned process of transformational logic appears in psychological behavior, social organization and cultural phenomena. Recognizing the pattern in different positions across disciplinary lines, unfolding in a fashion thoroughly indigenous to the context in which it is embedded, is referred to here as transposition. In contrast to imposition, this concept suggests that each context yields up the pattern in its own way. The task of recognition is to see and describe what is happening.⁶³

This notion of transposition is crucial for the use of Loder's ideas in pastoral counseling. Pastoral counseling needs such a flexible scheme if it is to helpfully function within the broad range of parishioners' problems. Thus, the task of pastoral counseling is to recognize and to facilitate this patterned process of transformation within the many contexts and dimensions of human being.

A final point regarding the process as a whole relates to this notion of transposition, namely the comprehensive nature of the grammar. To say that the grammar is comprehensive is to say that it is appropriately transposed into many contexts.

⁶³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 229.

Loder points out that the grammar of transformation is operative in the course of human development, for example. He cites developmental theorist Hienz Werner, among others, in this regard.⁶⁴ Werner's term for development is orthogenesis, by which is meant, according to Loder, "the tendency of the living organism, personality, society, or symbol system to unfold in a given direction with relative disregard for the constraints of the environment."⁶⁵ In other words, there is an innate tendency for the organism, etc. to actualize its potential regardless of the environmental factors. Of course, these factors are relevant, but this teleological trajectory is innate.

The process of development, as illustrated in stage transitions, follows the pattern of transformational logic.⁶⁶ First, there is the pre-conflictual state, or "global" undifferentiated harmony or equilibrium. This state is disrupted (breaks apart) with the emergence of new capacities of the organism and/or demands of the environment. This gives rise to a differentiation of the elements contained in the previous equilibrium. These

⁶⁴ See Harold Werner, Comparative Psychology of Human Development (New York: International Universities Press, 1948). See also J. Langer, "Werner's Comparative Organismic Theory," in P. H. Mussen, ed., Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology, vol. 1 (New York: Wiley, 1970), chap. 10 cited in Loder, Transforming Moment, 127.

⁶⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 127.

⁶⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 127-29.

elements follow their own actualizing tendency, so to speak, in which, as part processes, they develop their own potentials, "specification," as Werner calls it.⁶⁷ Then, as Loder says, "All these parts, developing on their own schedule, come together at the next stage."⁶⁸ In this next stage, these differentiated elements come together in a new way to form a more sophisticated and adaptive integration than that which pertained prior to their articulation (breaking apart). This new integration, or equilibrium, results in a release of, and more efficient use of, energy. Further more, it "generates its own reinforcement" by its more adaptive capacities.⁶⁹

This account of the stage developmental process corresponds to the logic of transformation that Loder has identified. When the process is moved from the context of natural development to that of intentional creativity, there are slight variations, but the fundamental process is the same. The differentiation of the elements as they move out of the undifferentiated unity constitutes the conflict. Their further specification and possible combinations is the scanning step. The creative leap of the imagination in intentional activity parallels the emergence of a new

⁶⁷ Werner, Comparative Psychology, as cited in Loder, Transforming Moment, 127.

⁶⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 128.

⁶⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 128.

developmental balance. The release of energy for new competence in interaction with the environment is virtually the same in both cases. Verification is achieved in development by the actual performance of the new structure, as would be the case in some more intentional creations (scientific discoveries, for example); others would require different modes of interpretation.

The main point should be clear enough: the logic comprehensively describes the movement of transformation across the spectrum of human development and that of intentional creativity. In regard to the latter, the logic also operates in such contexts as scientific discoveries and psychotherapeutic healing.

Practical Implications for Pastoral Care and Counseling

As has been repeatedly mentioned, each theoretical piece of the model (apart from the first) has practical implications for pastoral counseling which can be summarized by a diagnostic, or treatment, question that corresponds to it. The theoretical piece of the model that is the grammar of transformation suggests the second practical, diagnostic question that a pastoral counselor needs to ask him or herself in using this model: "Where in the grammar is the client?"

The importance of this question may be obvious. As one can tell from the above discussion, each step of the grammar has its own character and focus. Consequently, a pastoral

conversation that is sensitive to these differences in character and focus would be shaped by them. In particular, pastoral counseling interventions would need to correspond to the characteristics of the particular step of the grammar that is occupying the client.

The object of pastoral counseling that uses this model is to facilitate movement through the grammar. This is accomplished by facilitating each step of the grammar as it presents itself. In order to do that, one must first be able to recognize the steps of the grammar in the narrative of the client. As with recognizing the dimensionality of a client's situation, so here: recognizing the step of the grammar that is occupying the client requires knowledge of the characteristics of these steps.

Furthermore, again as with recognizing the dimensionality of a client's situation, so here: the primary diagnostic reference is the client's experiencing or felt sense. Only the client knows where he or she is in the grammar. This does not mean, of course, that the client is able to say, "I am in the conflict step of the grammar of transformation at the present time." The client may no more be able to say that than he or she could name the dimensionality of his or her conflict. It does mean, however, that the client has a felt sense of where he or she is, and only by attending to the client's experiencing can one discern the step in the grammar that is occupying him or

her. Here again, there are no psycho-metric devices for assessing the client's place in the grammar. That comes from knowledge of the characteristics of the grammar and by listening to the narrative of the client. The client will be expressing one of the steps of the grammar in his or her narrative; the counselor's task is to recognize that, and adjust his or her interventions accordingly, and he or she cannot do that unless he or she is listening to the client with the framework of the grammar in mind.

The method for facilitating movement through the grammar depends upon the three theoretical pieces that have been discussed thus far: the constructivist epistemology, the four dimensions of being and the grammar of transformation. That method will be discussed in the final chapter where a general approach based upon the underlying constructivist presupposition and more specific types of interventions that are indexed to the particular step of the grammar and the dimensionality of the situation will be considered. Before that issue is taken up, it is helpful to consider the grammar of transformation as it operates in the primarily two dimensional context of therapy, and then as it operates in the primarily four dimensional context of spiritual conversion, or of convictional experience, as Loder sometimes calls it.

CHAPTER 5

Examination and Illustration of the
Grammar of Transformation in
Two and Four Dimensions

This rather lengthy chapter concerns, first, the grammar of transformation as it functions in the resolutions of conflicts that are focused in the two dimensions of self-lived world, and then, as the grammar functions in resolutions of conflicts that involve the full four dimensions of human being. The discussion of the former will be guided by Loder's understanding of the grammar in the context of psychotherapy, and will be briefly illustrated by reference to a case study presented by Loder. The discussion of the latter will also follow Loder's lead, but will receive a contemporary illustration from a case study of an acquaintance of mine.

Grammar of Transformation in Two
Dimensional Psychotherapy

In terms of the previous discussion, to consider the grammar of transformation as it operates in psychotherapy is to consider it as it operates in the resolution of conflicts that are focused primarily in the self-lived world dialectic. The grammar is being considered here in a context in which the first two dimensions are the focus, or figure, of the client's concern, while the latter two dimensions are the background, or are latent within the

focused conflict.

Loder claims that therapeutic transformation is, like all forms of transformation, essentially a knowing event.¹ In other words, therapy is principally insight oriented. Such insight brings healing because it restructures the conflicted elements of the personality into a more harmonious whole. This restructuring is essentially what has been described as knowledge. Understood in this way, therapeutic insight is therapeutic healing.

Loder says that the logic of transformation works as a "patterned process of healing" within the therapeutic context.² As such, it can provide structure to the counseling process. The therapist may use the structure of the grammar to guide his/her interventions in accordance with his/her theoretical orientation. Loder points out that such theoretical orientations will affect how the process is appropriated. Regarding the client-centered approach, for example, he comments, "a more thoroughly 'client-centered' approach will tend to eliminate the interpretation step altogether...."³ How one might use the client-centered approach for adapting Loder's scheme will be discussed later. For now, the point is that Loder recognizes that different therapeutic approaches will tend to emphasize, and

¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

² Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 60.

neglect, different aspects of the grammar.

Loder contends that the process is "a core process in any therapeutic sequence following in the psychoanalytic tradition."⁴ That is, the grammar structures the movement of therapy within this tradition. He is obviously using a broad brush in painting this tradition, for he includes within it diverse therapies, such as: client-centered, reality therapy, Jungian, and of course, Freudian therapies. The common aim among these therapies seems to be that of insight, more specifically, insight into the self, or self-knowledge. This does seem to be Loder's point, for immediately following the above statement, he writes, "My emphasis... is to describe the steps involved in coming to know the client and the client's coming to self in a transformational way...."⁵

Although Loder's emphasis will be followed in this regard, it should be said that the grammar seems to be appropriate for other therapeutic approaches which do not have self-knowledge as their goal. Family systems therapy can serve as example. It could be argued that the goal of systems therapy is precisely the reorganization that Loder describes as transformation; in this case, however, the elements are the people who compose the family system, and the axioms are the family "rules" for interacting.

⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 60.

⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 60.

Returning to specifically insight-oriented therapy, it should be mentioned that self-knowledge is often difficult to attain because, among other reasons, the client is frequently ambivalent about it. Various defenses constructed by the client tend to impede such knowledge. This is not to discount the possible survival value of these defenses when originally constructed, but to point out that one often does not (or will not) recognize when these defenses have become more harmful than helpful. Consequently, this "patterned process of healing" operates on these defenses as well, as it brings one to transformational self-knowledge, or healing. Loder says, "Thus, the healing process is essentially a knowing event working transformationally on defenses and the conflicts buried beneath them."⁶

Loder makes it clear that the logic of transformation within a therapeutic context differs from other contexts in that it involves another person in the process.⁷ It is important, therefore, to specify the nature of this relationship.

Within a broad understanding of the term, one could say that the relationship is client-centered. A more thorough explanation of this characterization will be offered below, but for now it is used to indicate that the process is

⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

centered in the client's experiencing. Loder makes this point often when he emphasizes the fact that the client's felt sense of his/her situation is always the primary datum in the therapeutic process. For example, when discussing the work of articulating the client's conflict, Loder writes,

Notice that the therapist, however informed he or she may be by theory, intuition, and experience, must follow the lead of the 'personal knowledge' of the client, both as to timing and as to content. If it is ever otherwise, interpretations fall on deaf ears or become coercive, and the aim of the process--that is, knowledge of the client--will have been set back by confusion and/or repression. As with transformational knowing generally, so with therapy; tacit factors give the lead to rational processes that then work elaborately to delineate conflict.⁸

Loder makes it clear that the various interventions of the therapist are always subject to the guidance, revision and/or rejection by the client. The client, in turn, is apparently taking his/her guidance from the "personal knowledge" or "tacit factors" that Loder mentions. The meanings present in the client's personal knowledge, felt sense, etc., are articulated and brought into awareness with the help of the therapist.

In order to accomplish this, the therapist may, of course, rely upon his/her theoretical knowledge and practical training. Certainly the therapist can add to the understanding of the client from the resources of his/her

⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 58.

theories of personality, etc.; however, these resources are never the primary datum of therapy to which all else must conform. The experiencing of the client is the primary datum in therapy, and other data (theories, etc.) are to be used and evaluated in terms of that experiencing. It is never the theory of the therapist that takes the lead in this articulation, but the personal knowledge of the client. Only so can the process avoid that which Loder criticizes in Dewey and Piaget, i.e., intellectualization, which is to reduce the living experience of the client to the constraints of customary, and perhaps distorting, frames of reference.

The relationship between the client and the therapist ideally develops into one of "rapport."⁹ Loder intends this term to suggest a shared world between the therapist and the client. This is a world created not simply by the therapist allowing the client's personal knowledge to take the lead, but also by the client allowing the "rational capacities and judgements"¹⁰ of the therapist to guide and further this personal knowledge. Within this world of mutual trust, the client and therapist arrive at "new knowledge--or a rediscovery of old knowledge--about the client's personality."¹¹ The difference between the two participants

⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

¹⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

¹¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

in regard to this knowledge is, as Loder puts it, "The client must come to it from the inside out; the therapist must come to it from the outside in."¹²

Loder makes the crucial point that apart from such rapport with a caring other, the client's conflict may become overwhelming, leading not to transformation, but to regression and disintegration. In one essay, Loder describes the first step in the logic in a way that is relevant to this concern:

The first step in the creative process [logic of transformation] itself is a disturbance of the equilibrium, a baffled struggle or conflict which is supported by a context of rapport. That is, when a conflict becomes overwhelming it can become so disruptive to the psyche that no creative movement can be made, and anxiety runs rampant. Conflict then needs a context of rapport if the creative process is to follow.¹³

The importance of this rapport probably cannot be overemphasized, for it allows the work of therapy to proceed. That work is the movement through the steps of the logic with respect to the client's particular conflict.

The therapeutic process begins with the work of "focusing" the conflict.¹⁴ By that Loder means simply defining the presenting problem. Clients often come to therapy without a clear understanding of the precise nature of the problem. They come with a discontent, anguish or

¹² Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

¹³ Loder, "Creativity," 220.

¹⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 57.

malaise, a felt sense of the problem, but with no clear articulation of it. In this model, as in many others, the initial step is to define the problem in terms appropriate to the client's felt sense of it.

It is a happy coincidence that Loder uses the word "focusing" to describe this process of articulating the presenting problem. As will be argued below, helping the client to focus on the felt sense of the problem (as well as on the other steps of the grammar) is the work of the therapist, once the proper relationship of rapport has been established. Loder defines the first step of the logic in a therapeutic context succinctly when he says that it is the "focusing of the conflict in the context of rapport."¹⁵ By this statement he essentially means focusing attention on the felt sense of the conflict and beginning to bring its elements to adequate differentiation and articulation within the safe environment of a caring other.

The next step, the interlude for scanning, involves the process of searching one's memory for prototypes for the conflicted situation, teasing out recurring themes in the client's life that relate to the conflict, naming the resources for addressing the problem, considering ways that similar conflicts may have been met, considering possible ways that the elements of the conflict may be recombined,

¹⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 58.

etc.¹⁶ In this exploratory interlude, one further differentiates the elements of the conflict, indwelling them in order to know them with as little distortion as possible. This indwelling of the elements is crucial, for it is they that will be recombined into a new arrangement of meaning in the following step. Consequently, it is important that their true nature be known, otherwise the resolution will be compromised by an inadequate, not to mention false, articulation and understanding of the conflicted elements.

As was mentioned above, a point that Loder does not explicitly discuss is that one of the "elements" of the conflict is the nature of the relationship among them. This is not contradiction here, for it is not a confusion of "logical types";¹⁷ it is not being claimed that the relationship is of the same class of phenomena as are the elements. That important distinction must be maintained. The point is that in the process of coming to indwell and differentiate the elements of the conflict, the articulation of the nature of the relationship of these elements should be considered, as well. In other words, one may name the axioms that are governing the conflicted system. Of course, it may be that these axioms are too complex to be adequately named, but it may also be that a simple formula or metaphor may be found to describe it (which may be more useful to the

¹⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 58.

¹⁷ Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch, 6-12.

client than an elaborate theoretical explanation). In any case, it is important to note that these axioms are precisely what will be changed in the imaginative resolution of transformation, whether they can be adequately named or not.

During this scanning phase various connections may emerge which make it necessary to revise the conflict as previously articulated. One may move from the precipitating conflict to the basic conflict as a result of this step. Not only might one discover that the previous articulation was inadequate, not comprehensive enough, one might find that it was essentially wrong; one was pursuing the wrong conflict. Recognition of this error is "negative insight," as Loder calls it.¹⁸ Such negative insight might occur when one discovers that one had been attempting to resolve a two dimensional conflict when in fact the conflict was four dimensional, or vice versa.

"Constructive, healing insight,"¹⁹ on the other hand, which is the resolution of the conflict, is the work of the client's imagination. This is the third step of the logic, in which the differentiated elements are composed in a new and harmonious way. Loder is clear that this composition is the result of the imaginative work of the client, rather than the therapist. There is apparent here a deep trust in

¹⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 58.

¹⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 59.

the creative capacities of the client to reconstruct these elements in a meaningful and appropriate way, following the paradigm of transformation. Loder says, "Insight is permanently--both in its significance and in its power to effect change--the imaginative work of the client. His or her personality must finally reintegrate those fragments that comprised the conflict--both as felt and as rationally focused."²⁰

This is a significant statement. First, as has been said, healing is clearly the work of the imagination, and that of the client, not the therapist. As will be made clear, this trust in the client's ability to compose a meaningful resolution is a crucial aspect of the client-centered approach, as well. This approach can be contrasted with other therapeutic approaches in which resolution is primarily the responsibility of the therapist.

Secondly, one should note from this statement that healing involves a reintegration of the fragments of the conflict. The word "reintegration" suggests the nature of the preceding process as being one of disintegration, in the sense of articulation (breaking apart) or analysis.

It should be repeated here that the very idea of combining certain elements of the personality in new ways may itself be a novel proposal for some clients. Realizing that one may recombine elements of one's life may itself

²⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 58.

become subject for therapeutic discussion. One may need to deal with the motives for maintaining a particular way of holding together certain elements. To give up a particular integration may mean more than simply that; it may mean having to reconsider a host of related issues. For example, a client may have learned from a parent that sexual feelings are bad. To question that attitude, that way of composing a meaning to sexuality, will probably lead in turn to questioning the parent's own integration in this area, and perhaps one's relationship to that parent. The point here is that such possibilities must be considered, for they may exert a distorting influence on, and may be an impediment to, transformation. For recall that transformation, by definition, involves alteration of the axioms governing a situation, and if these axioms are being reinforced (either interpersonally or intra-psychically) in significant ways, then transformation becomes more difficult and its implications more extensive. Here again, the importance of being guided by the client's experiencing must be mentioned, for unless the therapist is so guided, he/she may overlook critical elements in the conflicted situation and become puzzled about the client's resistance to transformation.

In light of Loder's comment about the power of the client's imagination to integrate the conflicted elements as felt and as rationally focused, it needs to be repeated that the insight or image that integrates the fragments of the

conflict does so both in terms of affect and cognition. The image reconciles the elements as understood and as felt by the client. It is important that these aspects are dealt with in the reconciling image, for it portends healing for the whole personality.

Furthermore, something that was mentioned when discussing the grammar as a whole should be repeated here, for it is particularly relevant for therapy; and that is, the unpredictability of the creative leap of the imagination. One cannot predict how the client will imaginatively recombine the elements of the conflict, nor should the therapist attempt to do that work for the client. This is to side against those therapies that would fit the client's situation into a diagnostic mold for which the therapist holds the healing answer.

As with other contexts, so here, the image may not be creative or true to the conflict as articulated. This is particularly the case in the therapeutic context because of the power of the defense mechanisms and the related aversion for the conflict which these mechanisms were designed to suppress. The resulting "resolution" may represent a distortion of some kind. Loder suggests "transference"²¹ as just such a distortion, as when, for example, a conflict with one's father is "resolved" in terms of the therapist. Such a resolution is not creatively authentic because, among

²¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 58.

other reasons, it distorts the nature of the conflicted elements, which involve the relationship of the client with his/her father, not his/her therapist. Because of this ever present possibility of distorted, imaginary constructions, the therapist is responsible for checking the client's constructions with the nature of the conflict as articulated, so "that transformation, not fantastic escape or clever defense, is the outcome of the process."²²

This discussion of this crucial step of the grammar in the therapeutic context will be concluded by quoting again from Loder. Here he is describing the discontinuity-continuity polarity of the grammar as a whole, but it succinctly sums up the grammar for therapy.

Mediation via the imaginative construct springs from an engagement and indwelling of a conflicted situation, its faults and dissonance, but then, from a point seemingly disengaged from the conflicted situation, emerges a transformed construction of those elements ready to be interpreted back into the situational context, liberating a sense of resolution, and constituting a substantial gain in knowledge.²³

Once the imaginative resolution happens, there is a release of the energy that was bound up with the conflict. Loder writes, "New energy is available because the mind has found an easier way to reassemble all the aspects of the conflict."²⁴

²² Loder, Transforming Moment, 58.

²³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 41.

²⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 59.

Along with the release of energy, there is a release of the "I" that was embedded in the conflict. The "I" now transcends the conflict and is free to choose for or against the resolution. The compulsive repetition of, or enslavement to, the previous pattern is broken by the emergence of the new pattern as presented in the image. This is essentially the dynamic of the fourth step. Loder makes it clear that without this release of energy and of the enslaved "I," it is doubtful that authentic resolution has occurred: "The 'aha' and release are the surest signs that genuine insight has been attained."²⁵

The choice presented in this release is made clear to the client in the final step of interpretation where the mediating image is interpreted in terms of the conflict, as its hoped for resolution. This clarity heightens the imperative of the transcendent I to choose for/or against the new possibility that is present and known through the image. As Loder quotes Freud, "The client is 'given the freedom to choose for or against the neurosis.'"²⁶

Although some therapies would minimize the interpretation step (Loder mentions client-centered therapy, as was said; one might add others), it is important in

²⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 59.

²⁶ Sigmund Freud, The Ego and the Id, trans. J. Strachy (New York: Norton, 1960), 69 as quoted in Loder, Transforming Moment, 59.

solidifying the gains made in the resolution.²⁷ This step is essentially the articulation of the felt meaning of the image in terms that correspond to the conflict. Just as there was a felt meaning to the conflict that was symbolized in awareness in the first part of the process, so now, there is a felt meaning to the imaginative resolution which is articulated in the interpretation step.

The way that Loder understands the grammar in the two dimensional context of therapy has now been discussed. He provides a brief case study of it from his counseling practice that is worth looking at to further elaborate his view of the grammar in therapy.

Case Study

This is the case of Christina.²⁸ She presented herself for counseling as one who was conflicted about her lesbian feelings. The counselor and she worked with this discomfort, arriving at the tentative conclusion that her feelings had to do with her relationship with her mother. That conclusion in time proved to be false, as Loder says, "her notions about her mother were more like extrapolations from a textbook; that is what she had read and presumed to be the case."²⁹ Due to this "negative insight," the realization that they had formulated the problem in

²⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 59.

²⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 60-63.

²⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 61.

inappropriate terms, the counselor and Christina reformulated the problem in terms more appropriate to her actual situation: lack of clear definition regarding sexuality from either parent, coupled with failure of either parent to express consistent and sincere love for Christina. As Loder says, "The apparent result was a narcissism in which her intense self-love worked as a compensation for the lack of any clear expression of love from either parent."³⁰

The resolution to her conflict came in a seemingly bizarre, but actually profoundly appropriate way. Loder describes it this way:

She then left the university [where she began her therapy] for a vacation and soon found herself in bed with one of her female companions, but this time it was different. As her companion approached her, she was seized with an overwhelming need to vomit. She jumped from the bed and ran to the bathroom where she heaved herself dry. When she returned, she felt absolutely no attraction for her companion, and in fact no further troublesome lesbian feelings appeared in the course of her therapy. Amazingly, as she had earnestly hoped, the catharsis and transformation seemed complete, and happily, she left school at the end of the spring term engaged to be married.³¹

From this admittedly brief account of a therapeutic incident, the steps of the grammar can be discerned.

The conflict for Christina was that she was having lesbian feelings and not wanting to have them. This obvious fact is worth mentioning not only because it clarifies the

³⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 61.

³¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 61.

conflict precisely but because it also suggests that resolution may have gone either way: resolution may have been in terms of either the lessening of those feelings themselves or the lessening of the resistance to these feelings.

The scanning step included tracing out the sexual feelings in Christina's history. This scanning work was temporarily sidetracked by the imaginary connections that Christina made based upon her reading in psychology, perhaps, rather than her own experience. After recognizing this as a detour (negative insight), the scanning proceeded to make authentic connections between Christina's current sexual feelings, and unhappiness with them, and the failure of either parent to be the loving caregiver and model that she needed.

The preparation in these first two steps resulted in the creative leap of Christina's imagination. As was indicated above, this leap could have gone in either direction: either in the direction of lessening or eliminating the lesbian feelings or in the direction of accepting them as a part of who she is. It appears that for this particular individual, her homosexuality was not an expression of her authentic sexuality, but was a distortion of it, due in part to her parental relationships.

It is telling to note that the resolution to her conflict occurred outside of the therapy hour. This is

significant because it confirms the nature of the resolution as being a creative leap of the client's imagination. It was a spontaneous event, exhibiting the unpredictability of the creative leap. And yet, one could say that this spontaneous event was prepared by the previous therapeutic work in steps one and two. It is not obvious how the vomiting episode resolved her conflict, but that it did seems clear from Loder's comment: "It was clear that the elements of the conflict had been dramatically rearranged from a sudden turning away from the narcissism to a commitment to a man for whom she had real heterosexual feelings."³²

As Loder points out, because Christina left school soon after this event, there is no follow up. Consequently, Loder gives no details about the steps of release and interpretation. However, these steps are easily envisioned. Christina is no longer compelled toward homosexuality and is able to choose a different course. The underlying psychological connections which had previously blocked her, apparently authentic, heterosexual feelings from effectively entering into awareness had been undone. She is now free to relate elements of her sexuality in a new way, free to enter into a heterosexual relationship. This freedom to choose for this new way of organizing her sexuality that was contained in the creative insight is the step of release and

³² Loder, Transforming Moment, 62.

transcendence. The way that this new organization is understood to be the resolution to the conflict of having lesbian feelings and not wanting to have them is, of course, the interpretation step of the grammar. This step may require of Christina significant reconstruction of those aspects of her lived world which involve her relationship with her parents. The energy and motivation for such reconstructions are given in the transforming moment itself.

The Grammar of Transformation
in Four Dimensions

The way that the grammar operates in a situation that is primarily four dimensional will now be considered. Four dimensional transformation is like two dimensional transformation in that it follows the grammar of transformation; it is different in regard to the depth of the conflict and the motivating force behind the movement through the grammar. The conflict involves confrontation with the existential Void; the movement through the grammar is fueled by the power of the Holy Spirit. Loder states this analogy between two and four dimensional transformation this way:

I am suggesting that between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit, the likeness is established by the logic of transformation. The same pattern applies to both, but it is transposed from one level to the other, making the human spirit conformable to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit intelligible to the human. The difference is that on the human level the ungrounded self is seen as the origin and the destiny of the human spirit, but on the divine level human transformations are

transformed and the origin and destiny of the Holy Spirit is the Holy One.³³

In light of this statement, what was said earlier about the transformation of transformations needs to be repeated, lest Loder be misunderstood. He is not saying that the transformations of the human spirit are transformed in a way that bypasses the agency of the human spirit. Rather, the primary locus of four dimensional transformation is the human spirit; and as a consequence of this transformation, the transformations that lie within the domain of the human spirit will themselves be transformed in ways that correspond to the new principle of life in the Holy Spirit.

The best way to describe the grammar of transformation in four dimensions is to follow Loder's illustration of it in the Emmaus story from the gospel of Luke. This narrative is reproduced below.

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What is this conversation which you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had

³³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 94.

hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since this happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; and they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said; but him they did not see." And he said to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He appeared to be going further, but they constrained him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?" And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them, who said, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.³⁴

Loder traces the steps of the grammar in this story as follows.

1. Conflict.³⁵ The conflict has to do initially with the lost hopes for the restoration of Israel. Israel is the disciples' lived world, and the hope for its restoration, which the disciples saw in the ministry of Jesus, has been

³⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 98-99.

³⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 99-100.

dashed with his crucifixion. Loder points out that this conflict has unconscious dimensions in that the disciples' hopes for Israel were too nationalistic. The exposing of this restricted vision is involved in the conflict that the disciples are experiencing. Christ is taking the initiative in bringing this aspect of the conflict into the consciousness of the disciples. "Thus," says Loder, "the divine initiative whereby Jesus submits to crucifixion is not creating a conflict but is exposing, focusing, intensifying a conflict they unconsciously brought into their original acquaintance with him."³⁶

It is crucial to note both that Jesus takes the initiative and that he is bringing to the surface a conflict that had been present, but unacknowledged. He is taking the initiative to bring to consciousness the ungroundedness of the ungrounded self, so to speak, insisting that the disciples recognize the reality of their existential situation before God. Their nationalistic hopes for Israel, which is a distortion of God's intention for Israel to be a "light to enlighten the Gentiles," is an indication of this distance from the ground of their being. In this regard, one might say that Jesus wounds before he heals; however, that might give the wrong impression that Jesus is causing the wound, rather than simply exposing it. Although one may be tempted to articulate the feeling involved here in that

³⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 100.

way, a more studied and appropriate articulation is that he is exposing the wound that is already there so that it may be healed.

In addition, Loder points out a critical distinction between two and four dimensional conflicts when he says, "In essence the conflict [in four dimensions] has the 'I,' or the ungrounded self; the self does not have the conflict."³⁷ The Void threatens to overcome the totality of the self-world reality. There is nothing that the self (or its resources in the world) can do to extricate itself from this conflict. However, the self is saved from abject despair because, says Loder, "of the possibility of new being."³⁸ He is referring here to the rumor of Jesus' resurrection. Generally speaking, the existential conflict is not overwhelming insofar as Christ is the one who initiates it and sustains one through it. The presupposition of faith here is that Christ will sustain the disciple in the midst of the test that constitutes the conflict in four dimensions. The supporting presence of Christ's grace in the midst of existential conflict is a key in discerning whether or not the experience is of God. If it is otherwise, one may well question the nature of the force initiating the experience of the conflict.

³⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 100.

³⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 100.

2. Scanning.³⁹ This phase is also initiated and guided by Christ. In the story, the disciples are led through their history as a people as it is recorded in the scripture. Following the leading of Christ they begin to see this scripture in a new light, and begin to make connections among its various parts that they had not made before. "This is apparently a deeper indwelling on their part than they have ever experienced before, especially as the past is connected for them via the dialogue, with present events," says Loder.⁴⁰ The elements of their religious heritage are "broken apart" from their customary configurations through the provocative leading of the "Inner Teacher," as Loder (following Calvin) refers to Christ's presence.⁴¹ Moreover, this indicates the transcendence of Christ vis-a-vis the scriptural record. Christ is becoming the interpretive principle for scripture by enabling the disciples to view it from the perspective of him as its fulfillment.

Loder makes an important point about the leading touch of the Inner Teacher when he says that Christ "facilitates an inner integration that does not contradict, but compliments the integrative potential of the subject."⁴² In

³⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 100-02.

⁴⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 100.

⁴¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 101.

⁴² Loder, Transforming Moment, 102.

this sense, Christ functions like a therapist, the difference being that Christ is "refocusing the conflict so as to maximize potential for a resolution that deals squarely with all four dimensions."⁴³ It is significant that Christ does not overwhelm the disciples by presenting data that is beyond the disciples' capacities to imaginatively compose meaning. Rather, Christ is seen working with what is already there for the disciples, i.e., the prototypes contained in the tradition, but in a way that stretches them or goes beyond them. One might note the similarity in this regard with the Piagetian process of adaptation as assimilation and accommodation, wherein moderately novel information is the most likely to be effective in producing change. That is to say, information for which the individual has no common ground in terms of similar experiences, prototypes, analogues, and the like, will be too different to be processed in a meaningful way; it will be unnoticed, ignored and lost. On the other hand, information that is nothing but instances of similar experiences, for which one has fully adequate categories or structures, will be assimilated to these existing categories without any significant change in them, and, consequently, no change in the individual.

The point is that Christ draws on the history of the individual (including the social, cultural, religious

⁴³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 102.

prototypes that have shaped that individual) in order to make himself known, in order to present himself to the individual in a meaningful way. (One should recall the discussion in the first chapter regarding the subject-object synthesis of knowledge in this regard). However, the prototypes upon which Christ draws for meaning are stretched; at the same time that they lend meaning to the encounter with Christ they are felt to be pointers to, sacramental elements of, a reality that exceeds their customary meaning.

In the scanning phase one is searching out these meaningful prototypes, confirming them in their potential to lend meaning to the felt sense of Christ's presence, while at the same time seeing them in their inadequacy to fully explain the felt sense of Christ's intention. As Loder puts it,

In simplest terms, scanning is an internal dialogue [with Christ, the Inner Teacher] that finds and grows the hope that is already there by establishing a context of rapport and tracing down the roots of that hope in the realities of personal, social, and cultural history. There one finds, in solutions of the past, prototypes of the 'new' solution that will open the future. In the therapeutic situation, this is the work of the therapist in cooperation with the personal history and creative potential of the client; but the Other can as well be 'a sense of spiritual direction' or 'governance', as Kierkegaard called it. Under such form of guidance, prototypical patterns of the past come together to give new meaning and purpose to the present situation.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 102.

Although prototypes lend meaning, they cannot fully explain the felt sense of Christ's initiative. Indeed, at Christ's initiative, these prototypes are indwelt in a new way. The past provides prototypes, etc. by which meaningful images are composed so that the meaning and intention of Christ may be made known to them, without these images being understood as exhausting the meaning of Christ.

Loder says that in general terms scanning in four dimensions is "a process in which one's immersion in the conflict is seemingly undertaken by another's initiative."⁴⁵ He also notes that such a process is often based upon "leads and hunches."⁴⁶ This is suggestive of what was intended above by felt sense, or in Macquarrie's word, intuition.

Loder makes a related point when he speaks of "synchronicity."⁴⁷ That term may be explained by reference to Carl Jung's phrase, "meaningful coincidence"; that is, the coming together of seemingly unrelated events in a way that triggers insight, opens up new possibilities, etc., for the one for whom these coincidences are meaningful, that is, for the one whom is apprehended or grasped by them. The key here is that for such a person, the inner process corresponds to the outer configuration or sequence of events. Loder says, "Things coming together like this in

⁴⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 102.

⁴⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 102.

⁴⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 102.

four dimensional terms suggests to the subject that inside meaning is being correlated to outside event in a way that transcends the inside-outside distinction."⁴⁸ One's leads or hunches or intuitions in the scanning phase are often those provoked by such synchronicities.

3. Insight.⁴⁹ Loder calls this third step "Transforming Intuition of Christ."⁵⁰ It is focused for the Emmaus pair in the recognition of the stranger as Christ: "When he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, then their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight." The word "recognize" is especially relevant since it means "to know again." The disciples know Jesus again, this time as Risen; and with that knowledge comes the recognition of the implications that he has for themselves and their world(s).

The eucharistic setting in this recognition scene is important. The bread represents Jesus' brokenness on the cross. As such, it also represents the disciples' brokenness, the rupture within themselves and their world(s) that opened for them with Jesus' crucifixion. Moreover, it represents the brokenness in their relationship with God, the Void, the absence of their groundedness--the sense of absence that Jesus experienced on the cross: "My God, my

⁴⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 102.

⁴⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 103-07.

⁵⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 103.

God! Why have you forsaken me!?" There is for the disciples a recognition of themselves in Jesus, an (imaginative) identification of brokenness. Note here the mirroring that was mentioned above when referring to Kierkegaard's understanding of the mirroring of the self's condition in the God-Human. As with Kierkegaard, so here, this broken condition is not simply mirrored, but mirrored as resolved: it is the Risen Christ who holds the symbol of his broken body in his hands. As Loder says, "This ... is not merely a union of brokenness, because the bread is embraced by his resurrected Presence. It is a union of brokenness embraced and upheld by his resurrected Presence, which is now theirs to incorporate."⁵¹ This experience presents a "whole new way of looking at things,"⁵² not the least of which is their way of looking at the meaning of Israel. They now see Israel no longer as their world but as God's world, as the symbol for the rule of God. This new vision of Israel is represented in the vanishing of Christ before their eyes. No longer a thing in their world, he becomes the "lens"⁵³ through which they now see everything in the world. He is not a thing seen, but a way of seeing. This movement is necessary for the disciples' understanding of the full significance of Christ. Loder says, "Thus, as long as he

⁵¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 104.

⁵² Loder, Transforming Moment, 105.

⁵³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 104.

remains as object of their perception, he is a factor in their lived 'world'; to that extent he conceals his nature as the Christ, the revelation of all being, including theirs."⁵⁴

One might recall in this regard what was said earlier about the uniqueness of Christ as he moves from being one of the elements in one's situation to being the way in which these elements are related into a new whole. He becomes the axiom by which the elements of the system in question are reorganized; he is the principle by which one's self, and consequently one's world, are transformed. As the new principle by which these elements are organized, Christ can no longer be seen as simply one of them. He must disappear as one of the elements in order to reappear, so to speak, as the principle of their organization. This is as it is in St. John's gospel also: the historical Jesus goes away to be replaced by the Spirit who breathes Christ's life into the disciples and their lived worlds (see John 16:7-15, 20:22). Regarding these disciples' particular experience, Christ becomes the interpretive principle of the "new Israel." "Thus, the new Israel will not be external to them, bound to one time and place, one space and person, it will be a new reality in which all persons can live."⁵⁵ No longer explained by the historical prototypes, the new

⁵⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 104.

⁵⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 104.

Israel is understood adequately only in terms of Christ.

It is worth repeating here what has been said in other contexts: the creative potential of the disciple is not destroyed in this event; rather, it is given a new condition, "God's World,"⁵⁶ in terms of which it composes its lived world. The lived world is composed in a way that corresponds to the felt meaning of God's World as present(ed) in the event of transformation. This creative composition occurs spontaneously in the event itself: the imagination is inspired in the moment to create meaning out of (and as part of) the event of recognizing Christ. It also occurs more intentionally and systematically as the church attempts to live out this meaning in its continuing existence in the world.

In addition, it is important to point out that the resolution here is in terms of the articulated conflict, namely, the collapse of Israel. A new meaning for Israel is generated whereby that conflict is resolved. The "old" Israel does collapse, the old way of holding together the elements of Israel (history, theology, scripture, etc.) does disintegrate, but as concomitant, or prelude, to the reorganization of those same elements as new Israel.

This is a significant observation in that transformation is seen to involve a negation of a previous composition, which is what has been noted before as a

⁵⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 104.

breaking apart of this conflicted composition. Here there is an additional aspect: the conflicted composition is seen to be itself a negation of a previous possibility, one that was the intention of God. The nationalistic Israel was a negation of God's intention for it as a "light to the Gentiles," a sacrament for other peoples of God's intention for the world. This is the same dynamic as expressed in the myth of the fall, where humanity is created to have communion with God, but that possibility is negated as humanity uses its freedom to establish itself (ground itself) apart from that relationship, choosing to live "according to the flesh" (in Pauline terms), and organizing itself into the "world" (in Johannine terms), as the human culture established and maintained apart from God. That negation is negated in the transformation in four dimensions. The negation of God's purposes for Israel is negated in the transformational experience of the significance of the Risen Christ for the Emmaus disciples.

Loder describes this negation of negation this way:

Human intention, self defeating in its negation of divine initiative is negated by divine intention. Cancellation is the result of this double negation such that human intention is now left free to choose for the Author of the cancellation. Thus the nature of the divine bestows itself through the freedom of human choice made in the context of grace. Three key movements are interlocked in this summation: (1) double negation, (2) liberation of the self's capacity to choose for itself as spirit [as grounded in the Power that posits it], (3) a four dimensional integration composed by the Author of the double negation. Movements 1 and 3 constitute the context of grace

within which this movement of faith (2) can occur.⁵⁷

It should be added that although movements 1 and 3 do constitute a context of grace, there is a sense in which movement 1 could be said to be judgement and movement 3 that of grace. For the negation of negation is clearly a "no" that is spoken to the way of ordering life that negates the divine intention. Loder seems to acknowledge this point when, in discussing the following step, he says,

The revelation of Christ has laid a judgement on them; they had missed the point from the beginning, and they had been living out a despair of their own making. However, they are judged in such a way that they are not condemned, but informed by a new and accurate picture of themselves as in and part of his World.⁵⁸

This results in a new sense of "vitality, ... assurance and enthusiasm."⁵⁹ This leads us to the next step of release and transcendence, which will be taken up in just a moment.

Before that, the importance of this point about judgement needs to be clarified. Its importance lies in the fact that within the context of grace in which transformation occurs there is also a felt sense of confrontation, of judgement, addressed to one's current composition of self-world. This aspect of judgement needs

⁵⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 105.

⁵⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 108.

⁵⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 108.

to be kept in mind for practical purposes in so far as it is a part of the total felt sense, and that it might stimulate resistance to transformation.

Finally, in discussing this step Loder makes two further points that need to be mentioned. First, he points out that the transforming intuition of Christ occurs sacramentally, meaning by that "how the imagination connects four dimensional transformation to the depths of the personality."⁶⁰

The image that comes with intuitive power to reorganize the elements of the original conflict may be attached to a dream, cluster of memories, a vision of the future, or even to a person or circumstance in the lived world.⁶¹

That is to say, any of these events, and others, may be the medium through which the transforming intuition of Christ comes to an individual. This is essentially the point that was made with reference to Macquarrie, that the nature of the mundane events through which Christ is mediated do not exhaust the essence of the event as transformational; rather, there is more to the event that is intuited or felt, and this "more" constitutes the essence of the event. A similar point was made just above regarding the function of prototypes in convictional experience.

Finally, the imagination is freed by the transforming event to recompose a world based upon and reflecting the

⁶⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 105.

⁶¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 105.

reality of the One that is intuited in the event. As Loder puts it, "The self relates to Christ in such a way that the 'world' it composes is recognizably created in response to his having 'gone before'. It is Christ's world that the self creates out of the freedom that Christ's grace has made possible."⁶²

4. Release and Transcendence.⁶³ The "new vitality ... assurance and enthusiasm" that was just mentioned above that belongs to this step results from the release of tension that was bound up with the existential conflict. Prior to the intuitive vision of Christ, the Emmaus disciples were holding together their world by sheer effort of the will against the encompassing Void. Now that they have become grounded in the power of being which holds all worlds in being, "They feel less need to hold the 'world' together against their anguish and conflict."⁶⁴ They are released from relying upon human effort to compose meaningful worlds in the face of the Void.

The joy in this release includes, but is more than, the pleasure of the reduction of psychological tension. The self shares the joy of the Teacher. This is the joy of Christ at having brought an individual into authentic relationship with and knowledge of him not unlike the "joy

⁶² Loder, Transforming Moment, 106-07.

⁶³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 107-11.

⁶⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 108.

in heaven over one sinner who repents." Loder says, "It is a suffusion of the personality with the joy of the 'Teacher' at having 'made the point'...."⁶⁵

Loder speaks of "mundane ecstasy,"⁶⁶ meaning by that a transcendence that does not remove one from the world, but, on the contrary, "one perceives the world of common experience in a new way."⁶⁷ One sees the glory of the Lord in the creation of the Lord. Loder suggests that this mundane ecstasy is similar to the transparency of faith that was discussed above with respect to Kierkegaard; however, here Loder's point is that the self is not only transparent to its Source in God, but also with respect to the world as God's creation.

In this the "transparency of faith," as Kierkegaard spoke of it, is exhibited not only by the self toward its ground in Christ but also toward the World as the creation of Christ's intention.⁶⁸

This idea is important when considering the relationship between two and four dimensional transformation. Transparency with respect to both God and the world is the goal of any transformational event (in four dimensions). The point is that through the transforming event one begins to see and to seek the intentionality of

⁶⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 108-09.

⁶⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 109.

⁶⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 109.

⁶⁸ Loder, Transforming Moment, 110.

Christ in one's (imaginative) composition of the lived world.

To be sure, the Christian ecstatic is liberated by a new awareness; the "I" as in therapeutic knowing, is set in the position of being freed to choose for or against the new World of Christ's intending. Yet this sort of freedom and power to create depends entirely on discerning the intentionality of Christ.⁶⁹

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One seeks the Presence of Christ and receives discernment regarding his intention so that freedom, power, or whatever may be called for will have contours that fit what God is already doing. In Christian terms, one seeks to compose only the World that God is composing.⁷⁰

One should note that within the construction of one's lived world as a reflection of Christ's intention there is room both for individual creative freedom and for the determinative influence of Christ's Spirit. Christ's intention is not envisioned here as a constrictive dogma in terms of which there can be only one right, Christian response to a given situation, a response which can be defined before hand and then applied to a given situation. The Spirit of Christ is not the source of a new legalism, but is the principle of life, a way of life. Within this way there is room for a variety of faithful and authentic responses by unique individuals to a given situation. In fact, one could say that only as it is an authentic response of that individual can it reflect the intention of the

⁶⁹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 110.

⁷⁰ Loder, Transforming Moment, 110.

Spirit, for the Spirit creates freedom. It is the creative decision of a freed individual, rather than the rote response of one of the crowd that can reflect the Spirit. On the other hand, although the way of the Spirit is one of creative individual response, not all responses of individuals can be said to be within the way of the Spirit. As has been repeatedly indicated, the Spirit is something; the Spirit is not just another name for human creative freedom. Although it is true that "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17, RSV), nevertheless it is the Spirit of the Lord, meaning that the Spirit does intend something--the will of the Lord--and there is that which lies outside of this will. To put this in terms of the previous discussion, not all articulations of the felt sense of the Spirit adequately express the meaning of it. Not all responses to the Spirit adequately represent the intention of the Spirit. As Loder points out, discernment is necessary. This leads to the final step, that of interpretation or verification.

Before moving on to that step, one comment about the implications of this for pastoral counseling is in order. There are two aspects in any situation that a counseling pastor must keep in mind. First, he/she must attend to, and help the client attend to, the two dimensional elements in terms of which the client is responding to Christ's intention. As "grace completes nature, not destroys it," so

Christ's intention will be to fulfill the nature of the two dimensional elements, rather than distorting them. An appropriate response to Christ's intention will not, therefore, be a distortion of the nature of the elements. The second aspect, then, is to attend to the intention of Christ. Simply knowing the nature of the two dimensional elements is not enough; there is a way within the Spirit for organizing these elements so that Christ is revealed in them without distorting their nature. The counseling pastor must help the client attend to both the nature of the elements and to the intention of the Spirit.

In terms of the imagination, there is a double movement here. One imaginatively composes the intention of the Spirit in terms of the nature of the elements. These elements are (1) themselves imaginatively composed into a configuration (2) in a way that the imagination discerns to be the intention of the Spirit. The imagination mediates between the felt sense of the elements in two dimensions and the felt sense of the Spirit in an effort to compose a response that preserves the integrity of these elements and is faithful to the leading of the Spirit.

5. Interpretation or Verification.⁷¹ Since the knowledge conveyed in convictional, or four dimensional, experiences calls into question or qualifies other knowledge and modes of knowing, this ordinary knowledge or modes of

⁷¹ Loder, Transforming Moment, 111-14.

knowing cannot be adequate measures of that which is conveyed in convictional experience. Thus, verification and interpretation must proceed along somewhat different lines, even though the formal characteristics of verification and interpretation remain: congruence and correspondence.

Essentially the verification proceeds via independent confirmation; that is, different people have similar experiences. Verification proceeds along the way of the creation of a new people who are the public in terms of which convictional experiences are interpreted.

The Church's unsocialized, unlearned, unpracticed unity as a new people, who were constituted in a way that made the resurrected Christ the only necessary and sufficient condition of their existence, is the verification of their separate experiences. This is the basic argument the text presents for the validity of the Emmaus experience.⁷²

The experience of the Risen Christ is jointly shared by a variety of people, thus establishing its own criteria of validity. Christ creates the basis for verifying experiences of himself in the shared experience of Christians. In the Emmaus story, the two men return to tell the others of their experience only to have a similar experience related to them.

Loder again uses the term "synchronicity" in this regard. It was defined above, as following Jung, "meaningful coincidence." It suggests an historically or

⁷² Loder, Transforming Moment, 112.

empirically a-causal relationship among events that nevertheless conveys a meaningfulness to those who are grasped by them. That which could easily be construed as a mere coincidence by an outsider is recognized by one who is given faith as being a meaningful one.

This idea also captures the sense of grace present in such confirmations. There is a gifted juxtaposition of circumstances that grasps one in the same way that the original event did, and which furthers that experience in terms of its public articulation. In other words, grace can only be confirmed by grace.

This grace presses for explanation as well as appropriation. Explanation is the area of the church's language and culture of theology whereby it attempts to "thematize the transformational four dimensional quality of being in Christ."⁷³ In systems terms, the church tries to name the axioms that govern the system "in Christ."

Loder points out that the culture of the church (theology, scripture, liturgy, etc.) is based upon convictional experience. It attempts to articulate such experiences. Such culture is not only interpretive but also evocative; that is, it evokes the experience that it interprets. "They [theological symbols] are best understood as evoking an awareness of the four dimensional reality that

⁷³ Loder, Transforming Moment, 112.

called them into being."⁷⁴ This is precisely the dynamic that has frequently been mentioned throughout this dissertation. There is a reciprocity between the experience and its articulation such that each leads to and furthers the other.

Loder includes an insightful discussion of the eucharist here, which will be mentioned in conclusion to this chapter.⁷⁵ Loder's point is that the eucharist epitomizes the movement that was mentioned above in reference to the vanishing of Christ in the Emmaus story. There it was seen that the vanishing of Christ as a thing in the world opened the disciples' eyes to Christ as the way that all things in the world are to be seen. He became the lens through which they saw the world as God's world. Similarly, in the eucharist, that which is outside of oneself, a thing in the world, namely the eucharistic elements, becomes, through the action of the eucharist (including, of course, the work of the Holy Spirit) that which comprehends and includes oneself. That which one knows as a thing in the world, Christ, becomes not only one's way of knowing, but also that which knows oneself.

In this figure-ground shift the complex of meanings focused on Christ no longer resides outside oneself as doctrine, nor does the participant any longer view the elements, the celebration, and their meaning as usual. Rather

⁷⁴ Loder, Transforming Moment, 112.

⁷⁵ Loder, Transforming Moment, 117-20.

the meaning of the Eucharist (Christ) becomes itself the lens through which one's own being, and being-itself, is viewed.⁷⁶

This discussion of Loder's exposition of four dimensional transformation will conclude with a statement of his that succinctly states the essence of this experience.

What we have come to understand in convictional knowing is how the objective truth of the revelation in Christ may be subjectively known. At the heart of convictional knowing is a radical figure-ground shift that is not merely perceptual but existential, in which the truth of Christ's revelation transforms the subject from a knower into one who is fully known and comprehended by what he or she first knew. Convictional knowing describes the structural and dynamic link between knowing about Christianity and becoming a Christian. As such, it supplies the necessary context for understanding those intense convictional experiences as the path of transformation from a life of two-dimensional truths into a four dimensional existence governed by the unfathomable truth of God.⁷⁷

Case Study

The following is an account of a contemporary case of four dimensional transformation. It is the story of a 24 year-old male, who will be called Tim (not his real name). Since permission has been given to use this story, this name change is the only alteration that has been made for this account.

Tim was raised in a small southern town. His family-- father, mother, older sister--attended the town's small and nurturing Presbyterian church. Tim has fond memories of

⁷⁶ Loder, Transforming Moment, 118.

⁷⁷ Loder, Transforming Moment, 121-22.

this church.

Tim's father, a physician, died when Tim was seven and a half. Tim recounts that event as a significant turning point in his life. Prior to his father's death, Tim assumed that life was beneficent. After his father's death, Tim says that he felt as if he had suddenly become aware of a curse that was cast over the earth and everything in it. No one seemed to be able to do anything about it, as if a power beyond them all had the final word regarding their fate. Although there was a certain freedom in regard to this power, no one could finally conquer it. Tim's most consistent and strongly felt articulation of this awareness (felt sense) was that of a curse. People around him didn't speak of it, because, he assumed, they knew that they could not do anything about it. Because no one talked about it, Tim was unprepared for it when it happened to his father.

It is safe to say that this was a turning point in Tim's life; it propelled him on his life's trajectory. Tim became serious, driven, achievement oriented--and anxious. Although he was popular in school and did well in various ways, he was rarely happy and occasionally suffered from anxiety attacks that began in his high school years (about age 16).

Following high school, Tim moved through a series of unfulfilling episodes. He tried out for a local college football team, but left before the season began; he enrolled

in another college and flunked out because he never went to class. He then joined the Naval Reserve and was assigned to the Naval Academy Preparatory School, later receiving an appointment to the Naval Academy--which he turned down. He was returned to his reserve unit in his home state and enrolled in another college. There he began using drugs. After one semester, he was deeply involved in the drug culture. The following summer he checked himself into the state mental hospital because, he says, he was afraid that he was about to be busted: he was selling drugs by then. As a result of his two-week observatory stay in the hospital, he received a general discharge from the Navy. He then moved to south Florida to work at construction for his brother-in-law. He worked there for about two years, quitting as a result of an argument with his brother-in-law. He moved to a nearby city, rented a rundown apartment and worked at part-time and temporary jobs.

Tim recounts that one day he was sitting in his room staring out the window when a passage of scripture spontaneously came to his mind: "Lord Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42, RSV). This is, of course, the prayer of the thief on the cross next to Jesus. Tim said that he did not know why he said that, but that when he did, he experienced a moment of peace, a moment that just seemed to come over him.

Not long after this incident, Tim was walking down the

street when he says, "It was like a light went off in my head." He describes it as a light that was at the same time a thought that came upon him as the thing that he must do. This thought/light "lit up" various aspects of his situation; in retrospect, he described it as a call, but at the time he only experienced it as the thing he must do. It was simply to leave, and so he did.

He sold everything he had (which was not much) that he couldn't fit into his naval duffle bag. He started out hitchhiking, not knowing where he was to go.

On his trip he encountered several meaningful coincidences, some of which saved him from potentially dangerous situations. For example, one time as night was falling, and he was about to enter a particular section of a town, he was picked up and warned about that part of town by a friendly driver, who then deposited him just beyond it. Several incidents like this one caught Tim's attention, but he didn't know exactly what to make of them.

Just outside of Nashville, Tennessee, he was picked up by what were called then "Jesus Freaks." These were young people who were loosely associated with a non-denominational movement to reach the mostly hippie, drug population for Christ. These people that picked up Tim were far from the proselytizing type, however. In fact, Tim would probably not have known that they were Jesus freaks had not one of them shown him some of his art work exhibiting Christian

themes.

Once they arrived in Nashville, the trio discussed among themselves whether or not to take Tim to a place that they knew about for the night. They decided against it since, they said, most of the staff was on a trip to a conference--in Florida! So, they let Tim off downtown.

Tim made his way through town for about an hour. Then, just as Tim was crossing a street, the same group of Jesus people happened to drive by on that same street. They stopped again. This time they decided to take him to this place that they had discussed earlier. They dropped him off at a "Jesus House." A Jesus House functioned something like a medieval monastery: it was a religious house that provided shelter and food to travelers.

Throughout the time that Tim was with this group, and particularly when they happened to cross paths again downtown, Tim was feeling a strong sense of anticipation, as though he were approaching the reason that he was called to leave Florida. When he climbed the steps of the Jesus House this sense was even stronger. However, there was no answer to his knock on the door. So he sat down on the porch to wait. What happened next was a transforming moment for Tim.

When Tim recounts this event, he does so almost apologetically, as if he realizes that he cannot adequately convey the significance of the event by simply telling it. He says that while he was sitting on the porch, a passage of

scripture from Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus came to mind: "Unless you are born of water and the Spirit, you cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:5, RSV). This was not simply an instance of recalling a portion of scripture; the words were addressed directly to Tim. Suddenly, before he even had time to think what was happening, he was aware of a life, a Spirit, right in front of him that was inseparable from the words that had just formed in his mind. It was as if the thought in his head had jumped outside of him and showed itself to have a life of its own; what's more, it seemed that this life was the source of the thought rather than Tim's natural cognitive processes. This life then seemed to ascend to a light beyond the overcast sky. This light was the center and the origin of the life and the words spoken to Tim. Then, it began to rain. Although described sequentially, one aspect of the event followed so closely upon another that it all happened in a "moment." As these things happened, Tim became aware that the one speaking to him as/out of the light was the one who had called him, who had guided and protected him on his trip. This meeting, this event, this moment was the reason he had left. All Tim could say was, "So it's You." He recognized in this presence the source not only of the recent events of the trip, etc., but also of all the graces and good things in his life. He described the presence as one primarily of grace and favor, in contrast to the drivenness according to

which he had previously been living. The presence was also one of truth. He said that the light was not only gracious, but also searching, not allowing Tim to rationalize it or to hide from it. Tim tried to describe the balance between these two aspects of the presence by saying that truth was always as much an aspect of the presence as was grace, and that grace was always as much an aspect of it as truth. At that moment, with the rain gently falling on him, he said, "the Spirit fell." It was as if the rain was the water through which he was "born of the Spirit." He becomes particularly inarticulate in trying to describe this, except to say that it was like waking up. It was not that any particular thing changed, but that everything changed. Everything was the same, and everything was different. He saw everything in the light that had spoken to him; it was as if that light had covered everything; he saw things in that light. Tim was overtaken with joy and amazement.

Tim also admits that as powerful as this moment was for him, he was not totally transformed. Even in that moment of joy, he was aware of the "tangles," as he called them, in his life. The light lit up not only a new and joyous world, it also lit up dysfunctions in his relationships, his denials and evasions of the truth about himself, etc. He says, though, that in that moment, he couldn't deal with these concerns, he wasn't willing to, although he saw them as belonging within the reach of the intentions of the one

who had spoken to him. In other words, the transforming moment was to continue, and in a way that would involve significant and at times painful changes in various aspects of his life.

Along with the release of joy that Tim felt, he also felt a need to commit to the one who had released him. The question was, "How?" Through several false starts, that need not be detailed here, Tim eventually found a church in which to worship where he experienced the presence of the one who had spoken to him on the road. From there he went on to finish college and to seminary, becoming an ordained minister in that church.

Although he has since become more intentional about developing a habitual sense of the presence of Christ, that event on the road remains heuristically crucial for Tim. He says that he recollects the sense of it from time to time, not only for encouragement, but also for guidance, that is, as a criterion against which to judge current understandings and experiences.

This account seems to highlight the important parts of Tim's story. Now Tim's story will be viewed from the perspective provided by Loder's grammar of transformation in four dimensions.

1. Conflict. It seems safe to say that the conflict for Tim began with his father's death. That event clearly awakened him to the reality of the Void and sent him in

search of an adequate way to address it. This is not to say, of course, that Tim could adequately articulate the nature of the conflict that he was struggling against most of his young life. Nevertheless, the conflict had an early beginning. It manifested itself throughout Tim's life, particularly in his inability to choose a fulfilling vocation and his periodic anxiety attacks. Tim could not settle because he was chronically unsettled by the Void that he first experienced at his father's death. The continuing impact of that event suggested, among other things, the futility of attempting to construct a meaningful existence. For how can a meaningful existence be maintained when it can be snatched away at any moment and all of one's significance eventually be lost as one's memory disappears from the generations that follow. Despair and anxiety exerted a powerful influence in his life and prevented him from engaging in life in a sustained and effective way.

Here one can see how a particular orientation toward the Void and the Holy can preclude a satisfactory resolution to two dimensional issues. Tim could not satisfactorily resolve the psychosocial issues of identity or vocation because his ego was too preoccupied with defending against the Void. Because of his childhood experience with death, the threats of the Void were real and near-at-hand for Tim; he could not easily dismiss them, nor, on the other hand, could he fully face them. This dilemma kept Tim chronically

unbalanced on his life's journey, unable to secure himself in a world that he knew to be constantly threatened with radical negation. Only as his personality is recentered in the Holy (the Divine Face), is his ego freed from the futile task of defending against the Void and for investment in that which lies within the range of its competencies, i.e., the psychosocial tasks of developing an identity and choosing a vocation.

2. Interlude for scanning. As will be recalled, the interlude for scanning is the phase in which the conflict itself is moved to the periphery of consciousness and various connections are imaginatively conceived. Clearly, the conflict had moved to the periphery of Tim's consciousness. Indeed, it had become unconscious. Nevertheless, it was influencing him in his various abortive activities as a young adult, activities in which he was trying (albeit unconsciously) to find a way to address the gnawing Void at the center of his life. Of course, these same actions could be framed another way: as an attempt to avoid the Void. Both perspectives reveal aspects of the truth. Tim was trying out ways to address the Void--interlude for scanning--nevertheless, he was doing so in distorting ways. The true nature of the Void was distorted in his attempts to deal with it in terms of his own ego-centered resources. He was attempting to address an existential negation by means of a two dimensional

transformation.

The period of searching could be understood as the scanning phase of the grammar, even though it also shares characteristics with the mistaken attempt to address existential negation through two dimensional transformation. That Tim never remained long in any one of these activities suggests the dynamic that is being described: attempting to transform existential negation through ego adaptation was seen by Tim (at some level of awareness) to be futile; but, since he had no other resource upon which to draw, he simply tried "more of the same" as Watzlawick would say. That is, he continued to try first order change in a situation that required second order change for resolution. In addition, the fact that he moved through so many first order changes so rapidly suggests that the awareness of the Void was closer to consciousness, and more influential, than it is for many people. Frequently, people are able to deceive themselves for years that their particular functional adaptations have silenced the Void.

3. Transformation. The third step began when Tim said the thief's prayer. That began the movement from relying on himself to relying on something else. Again, the precise nature of this something else probably could not have been articulated by himself at that time.

The event of the "light in the head" is intriguing. It has some of the characteristics of a transforming moment,

except it was not completely such. That is, it did not so much constitute a resolution to his existential malaise as it promised one. In a sense, it intensified the search that Tim had been on throughout his life by promising a possible resolution. It also furthered the movement that began with the prayer: it invited a lessening of his reliance on his own resources and a reliance on something else. The felt sense was so compelling and appropriate to his situation that he not only wanted to follow, but couldn't very well have not followed without compromising something crucial to his own selfhood. There was a renewed enthusiasm for life as a result of this event, but not such that the major question had been answered; rather, the answer had been promised, or hinted at, and the search itself, as an obedience to this "other" (and to his own sense of self), was felt to be worthwhile (not to mention exciting).

In so far as one can isolate a transforming moment, it was clearly on the steps of the Jesus house where Tim was "born again." He recognized Christ as the source of his calling, his renewed search, and the one who spoke to the existential reality of his life. He realized that what he was searching for had already found him. The grace of this one that was manifest in this moment was seen to be the way of being in life; that is, faith in the grace of this one, rather than reliance upon himself, was to be the organizing principle of his life. Born again is an appropriate

articulation of the experience, for that description is used in scripture to refer to being born of the Spirit. This is what happened to Tim. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus became the principle of life for him; he was introduced to the new possibility of living according to the Spirit, rather than living according the flesh.

It is important to note that this was an introduction of this new principle. Although it was clear in that moment that the life according to the Spirit was applicable to all of his life, not all of Tim's life was immediately taken captive by Christ. The working out of that principle in the various aspects of his life remained to be done. It was still possible to fall back into living according to the flesh, but the point is that the new creation had arrived for Tim.

It is also important to note that this event addressed the meaningless wanderings of Tim's life. Whatever was packed into this moment, it meant a new direction, a new reason for being, a new enthusiasm for engaging life in spite of its continuing negativities. These negativities remained and in that sense "resolution" may be the wrong word. However, in this moment Tim encountered and recognized the one in whose presence these negativities were overcome. In the light of Christ, the threats of the Void were undone. Although death, guilt, meaningless remained as possibilities in the world, their character as ultimate

curse had been cancelled in Christ.

It is significant that Tim subsequently entered therapy to work out some of the "tangles" as he called them. It is fair to say that as a result of this transformation, his ego was freed from its attempt to hold off the Void, and for more appropriate investments of energies in two dimensional situations. Tim focused on his relationships in therapy, which happened to be with a secular therapist. This fact put extra work on Tim to make sure that these two dimensional resolutions adequately represented the intention of Christ. Had he been working with a pastoral counselor, this aspect of his therapy might have been more intentional and mutual. As it turned out the therapist was sensitive to Tim's need to be directed by his faith. It could have been otherwise, and Tim may have had more of a struggle resolving his remaining two-dimensional conflicts in a way that reflected the principle of life in the Spirit.

The fact that Tim entered therapy in order to work out some of these tangles should not be taken to mean that the four dimensional event was ineffectual. Rather, it points to the distinctions among the dimensions. Although a new principle had been introduced into Tim's existence in terms of which all of his two dimensional realities were to be transformed, that does not mean that these two dimensional realities were immediately transformed in that moment. Therapy may be indicated to help his now freed ego to

construct two dimensional resolutions in accordance with the new principle of life in the Spirit. Because the pastoral counselor has an appreciation of both the psychosocial dynamics and the spiritual dimension of human being, he/she can be especially helpful in this regard.

4. Release and Transcendence. This has already been touched upon in terms of the joy that Tim felt in recognizing Christ, a joy that expressed the release of the "I" that was bound to the world in which the Void was all present and all powerful. He had found a new reality in Christ which he saw as presenting a new possibility for him (the mirroring phenomenon), which released him from bondage to a world dominated by the Void. Being in Christ meant being in the new creation of the Spirit. The joy that he felt was the joy of companionship of Christ; it was a sharing in the joy of Christ: to put it simply, Christ was happy for Tim, and that happiness was a part of Tim's happiness.

Tim was given a new reality for which he could choose. He was free to choose for Christ because Christ, in having first chosen him, had set him free. Tim made a series of choices in which he attempted to make and live out that choice for Christ. Some of these, he admits, were ill advised. For example, he joined a fundamentalist charismatic fellowship. Although this was not an entirely negative experience, the fellowship was too restrictive for

Tim. It lacked the theological/religious categories for fully articulating the felt sense of Christ's intentions as Tim perceived them, and so, it was an inappropriate way for Tim to choose for Christ.

5. Interpretation and Verification. Insofar as Tim's subsequent life was an attempt to live out in a public way the meaning of Christ for him, it was an expression of this step. More particularly, one could say that his decision to enter seminary was this. There he further discerned the connections between the nature of his conflict and the reconciling nature of Christ in addressing it. Regardless of the theological sophistication that Tim may have attained in this regard, it was essentially an elaboration of the reconciliation that occurred in that moment, and subsequent moments like it. It should be made clear that these interpretations not only made connections between the revelation and the existential conflict (congruence) but that it did so in a public way (correspondence). Not only was this the case in seminary, but in his vocation as a pastor. The theological enterprise of the parish pastor is that of making precisely these connections in order to re-present Christ in a meaningful way to one's parishioners.

CHAPTER 6

Facilitating Movement Through the Grammar of
Transformation in Two and Four Dimensions

The time has come to take up the practical question of method in the use of this model: "How am I to facilitate another person's movement through the grammar?" The answer to this treatment (in contrast to diagnostic) question is shaped by each of the preceding theoretical pieces of the model.

The first piece, the constructivist epistemology, suggests an approach which facilitates the client's innate capacity to construct meaningful resolutions to his or her conflicts. The approach that best fits this requirement is a client-centered one, which is based upon a similar, if not identical, presupposition as is the grammar of transformation. This client-centered approach is fundamental to the method of adapting the model to pastoral counseling.

However, this approach must be revised in order to accommodate the second piece of the model: its theological anthropology of four dimensions. The client-centered approach aims at facilitating the innate potential of the client. As should be clear by now, the Void represents the limit of that potential to compose meaningful resolutions to conflicts. Existential conflicts are resolved by the power

of the Holy Spirit rather than the potential of the human spirit. The client-centered approach must be revised in four dimensional conflicts so that the focus of counseling is on the client's experience of the Void and the Holy in his or her life. This revision is still client-centered because the primary focus remains on the client and his or her experiencing. Thus, the method of counseling remains client-centered while being adjusted to correspond to the answer of the first diagnostic question: "What is the dimensionality of this client's situation?"

The final adjustment that needs to be made in this method has to do with the final piece of the model; that is, the grammar of transformation. As will be made clear in the following discussion, the client-centered approach that is advocated here is one that allows a variety of interventions beyond the baseline of reflective listening. To be appropriate for use in this model, interventions beyond this baseline must correspond to the characteristics of the step in the grammar that is occupying the client.

Types of interventions that are appropriate for each step in the grammar are suggested in this chapter. Furthermore, these types of interventions, because they are types, or categories, of interventions rather than specific techniques, are appropriate for the steps of the grammar regardless of the dimensionality of the situation. The method of counseling, then, remains client-centered and

dimension related, and is further adjusted to correspond to the answer to the second diagnostic question: "Where is this client in the grammar of transformation?"

The Fundamental Method for Using the Model in Pastoral
Care and Counseling: A Client-Centered Approach

In discussing Loder's scheme, emphasis has been placed on the fact that the grammar points to an innate tendency and capacity in the human personality to move toward the creation of new and more adequate knowledge of self and world. This movement generally proceeds via confrontation with a conflict of some kind which initiates the knowing event. The point here is that this movement through the steps of the grammar toward the creation of new knowledge is fueled by this innate tendency. The steps of the grammar structure this tendency of the human spirit. That is to say, the grammar relies upon the creative potential of the individual; in fact, Loder has referred to the grammar as being a "creativity model."¹

The belief in the creative potential of the individual is one of the fundamental beliefs of the model. It follows, therefore, that any method that one uses to adapt this creativity model for pastoral counseling would, likewise, be based upon a similar belief. A client-centered approach is a particularly appropriate method for adapting Loder's scheme precisely because it, too, holds a fundamental belief

¹ Loder, "Creativity," 219.

in the creative potential of the individual to construct meaningful resolutions to his/her conflicts, thereby gaining in knowledge of self and world.²

There are two basic beliefs that govern a client-centered approach. The first is this belief in the individual's creative potential. The second, and related, belief is that this creative potential is more likely to be realized when the proper "environmental" conditions are present than when they are not. These two beliefs will be examined in turn, as they are presented primarily by Carl Rogers. These beliefs will be expanded somewhat by drawing again on the work of Eugene Gendlin. In doing so the relevance of this approach for adapting Loder's thought to pastoral counseling will be seen.

It should first be pointed out, a bit defensively, that the client-centered approach that is advocated here is not that which is caricatured as being nothing more than the "reflection of feelings." While such "non-directive" "mirroring" is appropriate and profoundly helpful, the intention is not to tie therapeutic hands to a single technique. "Mirroring and more" seems to be more like what

² See Carl R. Rogers, "A Theory of Personality and Behavior," in Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951), 487-91; On Becoming a Person (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1961), 35-36; and "Client-Centered Therapy," in Carl Rogers: Dialogues, eds. Howard Kirschenbaum and Valerie Land Henderson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 26-29.

is intended. In fact, Rogers himself insisted that his therapeutic approach not be characterized in terms of techniques; he preferred to think in terms of attitudes.³ Such therapeutic attitudes include a deep respect for the client as a person and for his/her right to construct his/her world.

Rogers states the basic position of client-centered counseling in the following statement:

The central hypothesis of this approach can be briefly stated. It is that the individual has within himself or herself vast resources for self-understanding, for altering his or her self-concept, attitudes, and self-directed behavior--and that these resources can be tapped if only a definable climate of facilitative psychological attitudes can be provided.⁴

In this statement one has the two basic tenets of this therapy: the individual's innate tendency toward growth and personality development, not surprisingly called the "growth hypothesis"⁵ or the "actualizing tendency";⁶ and reference to the relational conditions that enable that tendency to flourish. These relational conditions, or attitudes, are:

³ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 10-11.

⁴ Carl R. Rogers, "A Client-Centered/Person Centered Approach to Therapy," in The Carl Rogers Reader, eds. Howard Kirschenbaum and Valerie Land Henderson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 135.

⁵ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 10-11.

⁶ See Carl R. Rogers, "A Theory of Personality," 489-90; Carl R. Rogers and Betty D. Meador, "Person Centered Therapy," in Current Psychotherapies, 2nd ed., ed. Raymond J. Corsini (Itasca, Ill.: F. E. Peacock Publishers, 1979), 131-32.

"genuineness" or "congruence" in the therapist, "unconditional positive regard" of the therapist for the client, and "emphatic understanding" by the therapist of the client.⁷

The Growth Hypothesis

Regarding the growth hypothesis, Rogers says,

In most if not all individuals there exist growth forces, tendencies toward self-actualization, which may act as sole motivation of therapy.... The individual has the capacity and the strength to devise, quite unaided, the steps which will lead him to a more mature and comfortable relationship to his reality....⁸

Rogers is quick to correct a possible misunderstanding that may arise as a result of the phrase "quite unaided." He does not mean, of course, that therapeutic help is always superfluous; rather, he means "that no direct aid in the way of suggestions, advise, and the like are necessary."⁹ In other words, the motivation and capacity to move in the direction of positive growth is innate.

Elsewhere, Rogers goes on to locate this actualizing tendency within a cosmic horizon.¹⁰ In this essay Rogers considers the findings of various scientists who claim that there is a kind of growth movement, a entelechy, in the

⁷ See Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 11-18; and Rogers and Meador, 131-32.

⁸ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 26.

⁹ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 26.

¹⁰ See Carl R. Rogers, A Way of Being (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 113-36.

universe as a whole. Rogers refers to this as a "formative tendency [that is] at work in the universe, which can be observed at every level."¹¹ This formative tendency, which seems to be the actualization tendency considered on a universal scale, is evident in organic and inorganic evolution, in which a development is evident from less to more complex forms of being.

Thus, without ignoring the tendency toward deterioration, we need to recognize fully what Sdzent-Gyorgyi terms "syntropy" and what Whyte calls the "morphic tendency," the ever operating trend toward increased order and interrelated complexity evident at both the inorganic and the organic level. The universe is always building and creating as well as deteriorating. This process is evident in human being, too.¹²

Indeed, it was through his study of human being that Rogers came to this perspective.

Referring to the scientist Ilya Prigon, Rogers goes on to point out that the more complex the system the greater is the capacity for organizing and reorganizing itself. Such reorganizations follow, interestingly, upon "fluctuations" or "perturbations," which are said to "drive the system--whether chemical compound or human individual--into a new, altered state, more ordered and coherent than before."¹³ "This new state," contends Rogers, "has still greater complexity, and hence, even more potential for creating

¹¹ Rogers, A Way of Being, 125.

¹² Rogers, A Way of Being, 126.

¹³ Rogers, A Way of Being, 131.

change."¹⁴ This position, it should be apparent, is compatible with Loder's position regarding the conflict as initiating the knowing event, and with transformation leading to a more ordered, efficient and coherent state than that which pertained prior to the emergence of the conflict.

In addition, Rogers notes that the movement from a state of lesser to greater complexity of organization occurs as something of a leap. He writes: "The transformation from one state to another is a sudden shift, a non-linear event, in which many factors act on one another at once."¹⁵ In this regard, he refers to Gendlin's notion of "experiencing" in psychotherapy, in which the felt sense contains more information than a linear articulation can adequately express.

In summary, the growth hypothesis, which is basic to Rogers' method of therapy, is a developmental one in that it suggests an innate tendency and directionality toward increased differentiation and sophistication in the organism's adaptation to its environment. When viewed from a universal perspective, this formative principle suggests a cosmic teleology and a systemic view of the universe. The connection between these two perspectives is that the actualizing tendency of human beings, which informs Rogers therapy, is one instance of this broader, more inclusive

¹⁴ Rogers, A Way of Being, 131.

¹⁵ Rogers, A Way of Being, 131.

formative principle.

What Rogers is calling the growth hypothesis is essentially that principle of movement to which Loder has given structure in the logic of transformation. In making this assertion, it is not being said that the logic of transformation and the actualizing tendency are identical. Rather, the logic structures the movements of this tendency. The actualizing tendency is more like the orthogenesis outlined by Werner. It will be recalled that Loder, quoting Werner, defined orthogenesis as "the tendency of a living organism, personality..., to unfold in a given direction."¹⁶ This unfolding in a given direction, namely in a direction of more complexity, efficiency, etc., is essentially what the actualizing tendency is, as Rogers understands it. It is the driving force in the movement through the steps of the logic within the two dimensions of human being.

It should be pointed out that many of Rogers' statements suggest an implicit awareness of something like the logic that Loder specifies. For example, in his discussion of Pryogone, Rogers mentions that it is through perturbations that organisms move beyond their current organizational structure to new, more sophisticated ones. Moreover, the movement into these new structures comes as a leap, a sudden shift, a new gestalt, in which many factors are combined at once. Such a sudden gestalt is precisely

¹⁶ See p. 157.

what Loder describes as the work of the mediating image of the third step in the grammar. In speaking of this leap in a therapeutic context, Rogers describes it as "a new state of insight," which is essentially the way Loder describes the third step of the grammar.

It might be added that for Rogers successful therapy involves the construction of a new self-gestalt, a new and more harmonious arrangement of the elements that comprise the self. Such a gestalt is richer and more complex than that which pertained prior to therapy. In fact, one could outline the process of Rogerian therapy in terms that follow the steps of Loder's grammar of transformation.¹⁷ As Rogers generally understands it, the client's conflict is usually that between the client's current self concept and his/her "organismic experiencing" (undistorted experiencing of self and world), which is denied symbolization in awareness because it contradicts some aspects of this current self concept. Within the safe environment of the therapeutic context (rapport), these denied aspects of the personality are allowed into awareness, symbolized, articulated in various ways (scanning). This process involves the loosening of the rigid boundaries of the self-concept (axioms that organize the self system), and prepares for the revision of the self concept (constructive leap of the

¹⁷ See Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 125-59; and Rogers and Meador, 153-71.

imagination). This revision, or transformation, of the self opens the self to more fully experiencing each situation as it arises, rather than defensively restricting such experiencing (transcendence, release and verification). Even in such broad strokes as these, one can see the outlines of the steps of the grammar in the Rogerian process of therapy.

The discussion has wandered a bit from the main point, which was to briefly document the similarities between Rogers' idea of the actualizing tendency and Loder's grammar of transformation. To repeat, it is not being said that these two are identical, but that Loder's grammar structures the innate tendency that Rogers identifies as the actualizing tendency. The reason for emphasizing their similarities is that the conditions that Rogers names for facilitating the actualizing tendency are applicable, therefore, to facilitating the grammar that Loder presents.

This parallel can be further strengthened by briefly discussing an essay that Rogers wrote on creativity,¹⁸ remembering that Loder describes his model as a creativity model. Like Loder, Rogers contends that the process of creativity is not limited to a particular content or context. Note particularly that Rogers includes the activity of psychotherapy as an instance of creativity.

¹⁸ Carl R. Rogers, "Toward a Theory of Creativity," in Creativity and Its Cultivation, ed. Harold H. Anderson (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), 69-82.

I am assuming that there is no fundamental difference in the creative process as it is evidenced in painting a picture, composing a symphony... discovering new procedures in human relationships, or creating new forming of one's own personality in psychotherapy (Indeed, it is my experience in this last field, rather than in one of the arts, that has given me special interest in creativity and its facilitation. Intimate knowledge of the way in which the individual remolds himself in the therapeutic relationship, with originality and effective skill, gives one confidence in the creative potential of all individuals).¹⁹

Rogers' definition of creativity, likewise, has much in common with Loder's idea of transformation as involving a new relationship.

My definition ... of the creative process is that it is the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other.²⁰

Particularly important for our comparison is that Rogers identifies the creative force with the actualizing tendency. Rogers will be quoted at length in this regard.

The mainspring of creativity appears to be the same tendency which we discover so deeply as the creative force in psychotherapy--man's tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities. By this I mean the directional trend which is evident in all organic and human life--the urge to expand, extend, develop, mature--the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, to the extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self. This tendency may become deeply buried under layers of encrusted psychological defenses; it may be hidden behind elaborate facades which deny its existence; it is

¹⁹ Rogers, "Toward a Theory of Creativity," 71.

²⁰ Rogers, "Toward a Theory of Creativity," 71.

my belief however, based on my experience, that it exists in every individual and awaits only the proper conditions to be released and expressed. It is this tendency which is the primary motivation for creativity as the organism forms new relationships to the environment in its endeavour most fully to be itself.²¹

The actualizing tendency, then, fuels the creative process, which is the process by which the self creates novel relationship with itself and with its environment. The creative process is what Loder is structuring in his grammar of transformation.

Furthermore, the conditions that Rogers identifies for facilitating the creative process are virtually identical to those that he claims facilitates the therapeutic process. That would follow, of course, since the underlying force behind the two is the same. These conditions will now be considered.

Therapeutic Conditions

The three necessary conditions for successful therapy, i.e., for the facilitating of the actualization tendency, are: (1) unconditional positive regard, (2) congruence, and (3) empathic understanding. According to Rogers, the first two conditions create the environment for successful therapy; the third is the "work" of therapy.²²

Unconditional positive regard (acceptance) means that the counselor does not judge the client or his/her thoughts,

²¹ Rogers, "Toward a Theory of Creativity," 72.

²² Rogers, "Toward a Theory of Creativity," 78-80.

feelings, attitudes. The counselor values the client as a person and accepts the client as he/she is, i.e., non-judgementally. The client does not have to meet any "conditions of worth" established by the counselor. As Rogers says, "[The therapist] prizes the client in a total, rather than a conditional way. He does not accept certain feelings in the client and disapprove of others. He feels an unconditional positive regard for this person."²³

Rogers is clear that this attitude toward the client provides a climate conducive to the therapeutic process.

Unconditional positive regard, when communicated by the therapist, serves to provide the non-threatening context in which the client can explore and experience the most deeply shrouded elements of his inner self...his [the therapist's] deep caring is a necessary ingredient of the safe context in which the client can come to explore himself and share deeply with other human beings.²⁴

Regarding the second condition, congruence, or genuineness, Rogers writes:

We readily sense this quality of congruence in everyday life. We all know persons who always seem to operate from behind a front, who play a role, who tend to say things they do not feel. They are exhibiting incongruence. We tend not to reveal ourselves too deeply to such people. On the other hand, we all know individuals whom we trust because we sense that they are as they present themselves to be, openly and transparently--that we are dealing with the person

²³ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 13.

²⁴ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 14.

himself, not a polite or professional facade.
This is genuineness.²⁵

Rogers claims that congruence means being in touch with one's own experiencing at the moment instead of denying it to awareness. It does not mean that one has to tell all to the client, but that the therapist is able to allow herself to feel what she is really feeling at the moment, whether or not she chooses to express it to the client. The main point is that the therapist is relatively transparent to the client rather than hiding behind a persona. The client, then, has a chance to know that she is dealing with a real person and has the opportunity to develop a trusting relationship (rapport) in which the client can explore her feelings and thoughts in a safe and real environment.

These two conditions, which are essentially attitudes or qualities of the therapist, provide the foundation upon which therapy proceeds. They are the conditions in which the seed of self-actualization can grow. And, to return to the comparison with Loder, insofar as this actualizing tendency is the moving force behind the grammar of transformation, these conditions are necessary for the facilitation of the grammar. In Loder's terms, it is being said that these conditions are necessary for the context of rapport in which the grammar of transformation proceeds in a therapeutic context.

²⁵ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 11.

The third condition is empathetic understanding. This parallels what Loder incidentally refers to as focusing. Rogers says that this is the "work" of therapy. That is, the first two conditions set the stage; the third is what happens on the stage:

The ability of the therapist to perceive experiences and feelings accurately and sensitively, and to understand their meaning to the client during the moment to moment encounter of psychotherapy, constitute what can perhaps be called the "work" of the therapist after he has first provided the contextual base for the relationship by his self congruence or genuineness and his unconditional positive regard.²⁶

There are basically two aspects of this empathic understanding. The first is to understand what the client is experiencing. As Rogers succinctly puts it, "It is a sensing of the client's inner world of meaning as if it were your own, while never forgetting that it is not yours."²⁷

The second aspect of empathetic understanding is to communicate this understanding to the client. This is the aspect which is sometimes referred to as "mirroring" or "reflecting feelings." The point that Rogers makes in this regard is that the task is to communicate the sense of the person's experiencing so that he recognizes it as his. There is, in other words, a minimum of distortion; the client sees or hears him/herself, that part of him/herself which he feels or senses, but has not yet been able to

²⁶ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 15.

²⁷ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 15.

articulate. Thus, the communication furthers rather than merely reflects the experiencing of the client. Rogers says, "To communicate this perception [of the client's feelings, etc.] in a language attuned to the client, which allows him more clearly to sense and formulate his fears, confusion, rage or anger, is the essence of the communication of aspect of accurate empathy."²⁸

This means that the therapist attempts to help the client formulate the feelings that are just on the edge of awareness. The therapist does not push for deeply buried unconscious material, nor does she merely repeat what was said. In the former case, the therapist may create confusion and resistance; in the latter, "there would be no therapy." "Instead," says Rogers, "the client centered therapist aims to dip from the implicit meanings just at the edge of the client's awareness."²⁹ Rogers quotes Gendlin in this regard:

The client centered response at its best formulates something which is not yet fully formulated or conceptualized.... It formulates the meaning which the client has not yet symbolized explicitly but which he does now feel and which is implied in what he says. Sometimes it formulates the felt whole which the client has been trying to get at by various verbalizations.³⁰

²⁸ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 15.

²⁹ Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 21.

³⁰ Eugene T. Gendlin, "Experiencing: A Variable in the Process of Therapeutic Change," American Journal of Psychotherapy, 15 (1961): 233-45 as quoted in Rogers, "Client-Centered Therapy," 22.

Finally, these basic conditions of the client-centered approach are particularly apt for use by the pastoral counselor who considers four dimensional transformation to be one of his/her possible tasks. These mirroring, accepting, understanding conditions may have a similar impact on the client as did the affirming presence of the human face during infancy and as does the Holy presence in four dimensional transformation. Insofar as these conditions resemble the prototypical experience of the Holy in the human infant's relation to his/her parent, they preface the adult client for, and open him/her to, the recentering of the personality in the Holy.

Focusing

With Rogers' position in mind, and having just reintroduced Gendlin, it is appropriate now to take a closer look at the way Gendlin expands the Rogerian position. Two important steps that Gendlin makes beyond Rogers will be considered: first, a more detailed analysis of empathetic understanding, which Gendlin calls "focusing" (independently of Loder); secondly, the way that Gendlin opens Rogers' theory to a wider range of therapeutic interventions by considering the client-centered approach to be the "baseline" for all other methods and techniques.

Gendlin has devised a method for therapy that he calls

"focusing."³¹ It is being considered here as an extension of Rogers' idea of empathetic understanding, for it is essentially a way of accomplishing the tasks that Rogers envisioned as appropriate for empathetic understanding. Focusing is a method through which the implicit meanings of the client are articulated. These implicit meanings are the felt meanings that were introduced above. Focusing is essentially paying attention to one's felt meaning; it is a term that refers to the client's intentional referencing of this felt sense. It will be recalled that felt sense is a bodily awareness (an awareness felt primarily in the body) of a given situation. It is a pre-conceptual (and pre-imagistic) awareness or feeling to which one can directly refer in its articulation. Focusing is focusing attention on this felt sense and allowing the expression of it to emerge from it, not imposing a pre-conceived meaning upon it.

To repeat, articulations of felt meanings may involve concepts, images, etc. and are considered to be appropriate when they precipitate a release of tension, a physiologically and psychologically felt shift. This shift carries the experiencing forward so that new aspects of the felt meaning come to the fore, which are in turn articulated, etc. Thus, there is a reciprocity between the felt meaning and its articulation. This reciprocity is that

³¹ See Gendlin, Focusing.

which was discussed above primarily in terms of the underlying condition and its imaginative expression; it should be clear that the articulation of the felt meaning is the work of the imagination.

An important aspect of this articulation of the felt sense is that of differentiation.³² This is one of the basic concepts of focusing and is particularly relevant for our purposes. The felt sense is a whole comprised of many different aspects or elements. In the process of articulating this whole, one will differentiate some of these distinct aspects. Here one can see one important way that this method is useful for facilitating the grammar: focusing is a method for articulating the client's experiencing of the conflict by differentiating the felt sense of it in terms of the conflicting elements.

As was mentioned above, when a client presents a problem in therapy, it is rarely well differentiated. Instead, the client generally brings a sense of unease and discomfort about a particular situation. This feel for the situation as a whole is the felt sense which is comprised of a variety of undifferentiated elements. Through the method of focusing, the client is enabled to differentiate these elements and to discern which elements are conflicted and how they are conflicted. Again, how the conflicted elements are related is what was referred to above as the axioms

³² Gendlin, "Experiential Psychotherapy," 134.

governing the situation.

Focusing is the first concept that is borrowed from Gendlin's method of therapy. It is essentially a way of empathetic understanding and is more detailed than is Rogers' account. Focusing enhances the process of empathetic understanding.

Client-Centered Therapy as Baseline

The second concept that will be borrowed from Gendlin's work is that of client-centered therapy being the baseline for all therapy.³³ To say that client-centered therapy is, or should be, baseline means essentially two things.³⁴ First, this means that such an approach is basic to, or prerequisite for, all other methods or techniques. Gendlin argues that the essence of client-centered therapy is missed when it is assumed to consist of the technique of reflection of feelings, which then becomes one technique among others. The consequence of such an erroneous assumption is that the therapist forgets to listen, essentially leaving the client alone with the reality of his/her problem.

Without being able to listen, to hear, to respond exactly, to help the person share what is felt, the therapist is actually leaving the client alone. However useful the other things a therapist does may be, if the therapist can't

³³ Eugene T. Gendlin, "Client-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy," in Innovations in Client-Centered Therapy, eds. David A. Wexler and Laura North Rice (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1974), 211-46.

³⁴ Gendlin, "Client-Centered and Experiential," 216-18.

hear, the person is left alone inside. What the person is really up against is not dealt with, is not even brought in, is not even touched. Without listening, the inward sense of the person is not expanded, it remains not only alone, but compressed, sometimes nearly silent, dumb. that way there can be no relationship. A lot of pushing and pulling may occur and look very interactional, but genuine relating is simultaneously a coming to be of each person, an opening up and carrying forward into interaction. Without making real touch with what is there in another one cannot relate to that other.³⁵

Gendlin compares client-centered responding to watching the road while driving. One may, and must, do a variety of other things while driving a car, but, says Gendlin, "it is unwise to forgo watching the road for any other activity."³⁶ Likewise, one may do a variety of things in therapy, but unless one continually returns to the current experiencing of the client, one has missed the essential task of therapy, and is likely to crash. In sum, Gendlin says, "Responding in a listening way is the baseline prerequisite for any other modes of responding."³⁷

The second, and obviously related, point is that there are other modes of responding that may be appropriate according to the situation. Client-centered responding is baseline, but not the only permissible or even necessary response. One may suggest interpretations, homework, Gestalt experiments, etc. One does not have to rely only on

³⁵ Gendlin, "Client-Centered and Experiential," 217.

³⁶ Gendlin, "Client-Centered and Experiential," 217.

³⁷ Gendlin, "Client-Centered and Experiential," 217.

mirroring the client's feelings. This revision of the typical understanding of client-centered therapy addresses Loder's comment that a client-centered approach would tend to eliminate the interpretative step of the grammar. In this revision, one is certainly allowed to make suggestions in terms of interpretation of either the conflict or the resolution, for example. However, to repeat, one is not permitted to leave the client alone. Whatever intervention one uses must be followed up by a return to the baseline, to understand where it has left the client, to focus on the felt sense of the client as a result of the intervention. As Gendlin says, "Indeed one can and must do very many other things besides responding reflectively, but never without quite quickly again picking up what has happened in the person, what the person is now feeling and saying."³⁸

A shorthand way of symbolizing this baseline idea is to say that it involves "mirroring and more." The mirroring refers to the reflective listening and is absolutely crucial. However, one may, and at times must, do more than simply reflect feelings; one may interpret, question, confront, etc. One must then mirror what this more is doing in the client's experiencing.

Furthermore, this idea of client-centered responding as baseline corresponds to Loder's ideas regarding the general nature of the therapeutic process. That is, the client's

³⁸ Gendlin, "Client-Centered and Experiential," 217.

experiencing is the primary datum for therapy, and it is in terms of this experiencing that therapy proceeds. Whatever the therapist may do, as informed by the therapist's training and theories of personality, etc., must be qualified and guided by the client's personal knowledge, felt sense, of the situation.

All that has been said thus far about the use of the client-centered approach in adapting Loder's scheme is connected to the underlying presuppositions of that approach: given the right conditions, the creative potential of the client will construct an appropriate response (for that client) to his/her situation. Such a belief in the creative potential of the client is, as was said at the beginning of this section, equally foundational for Loder's understanding of the grammar of transformation in two dimensions. Rogers adds to Loder by providing the conditions and, with Gendlin, the method, for facilitating this creative potential. Loder provides the structure, the logic or grammar, the steps, through which this creative potential moves in the creation of new knowledge and resolutions to various felt conflicts.

Beyond the Baseline: Types of Interventions for
the Steps of the Grammar of Transformation

More specificity can be given to the interventions that are appropriate beyond the baseline of client-centered responding. The appropriateness of these interventions is

determined by the step of the grammar that is occupying the client. The character and focus of the client's current step in the grammar will affect the types of interventions that are helpful beyond this client-centered baseline.

It is important to emphasize that it is types of interventions that are being suggested here, rather than particular techniques. For example, the gestalt experiment of the empty chair is a technique which may be categorized as a particular type of intervention, i.e., a probing type. There are other techniques that might be a better fit for a given counselor's style and personality which could also be categorized as a probing type of intervention: simply asking questions, for example. The point here is to respect the individual counselor's personal style, etc., to respect the need for counselor congruence, while at the same time giving appropriate attention to the effect that the different characteristics of each step of the grammar should have on the counseling conversation.

In designating types of interventions for pastoral counselors, Howard Clinebell follows psychologist Elias H. Porter in naming five distinct types. To this list of five Clinebell adds a sixth. Porter's list includes: evaluative, interpretive, supportive, probing and understanding.³⁹ To this, Clinebell adds advising.⁴⁰ This

³⁹ Elias H. Porter, Jr., An Introduction to Therapeutic Counseling (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), 201; adapted by Howard Clinebell in Basic Types of Pastoral Care and

list is a good one to use in considering what types of interventions are helpful for facilitating the grammar of transformation.

These categories are fairly self explanatory; however, a word of clarification should be given about them. In Clinebell's words, an evaluative response is one that expresses "a judgment concerning the relative goodness, appropriateness, effectiveness, or rightness of client's feelings or behavior."⁴¹ This need not be a moralistic response which censors the client, but may include confronting the client with his or her inconsistencies, omissions, blind-spots, etc. An interpretive response is one that intends "to teach, to impart meaning to the client, or explain why."⁴² Supportive responses are intended to "reassure and to reduce the client's intensity of feeling."⁴³

Probing responses are meant "to seek further information or provoke further discussion along a certain line. Such responses imply that the client might profitably develop or discuss a point further."⁴⁴ Understanding responses are

Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 94-96.

⁴⁰ Clinebell, 94.

⁴¹ Clinebell, 94.

⁴² Clinebell, 94.

⁴³ Clinebell, 94.

⁴⁴ Clinebell, 94.

those which show that the counselor wants to understand the client's situation, including his or her thoughts and feelings about it.⁴⁵ Finally, advising responses are those that "recommend certain approaches, actions, beliefs or attitudes as helpful."⁴⁶

Each step of the grammar will now be briefly discussed regarding which of these types of interventions is particularly appropriate to it. The intent here is not to restrict interventions to the types recommended, but to suggest types that should predominate within a given step. Moreover, because client-centered responding is baseline, those types which are expressive of that approach, namely, supportive and understanding responses are always appropriate; however, they should predominate within certain steps.

The conflict step of the grammar is one in which supportive and understanding responses should predominate. In this step, the establishment of rapport is crucial, and that depends on understanding and supportive responses by the counselor. Furthermore, the presenting problem is defined in this step, and as has been repeatedly stressed, the client's felt sense of the conflict is the primary referent in this regard. Understanding responses help further the client's experiencing of the felt sense of the

⁴⁵ Clinebell, 94.

⁴⁶ Clinebell, 94.

conflict. A supportive environment, created by supportive responses, is a prerequisite for this kind of work. Furthermore, the sometimes overwhelming sense of crisis may need to be eased, which may be achieved by supportive type interventions.

Beyond these supportive and understanding responses, the counselor may begin to probe in order to help clarify the nature and extent of the conflict. Although probing responses should not predominate in this step, they are certainly appropriate. The counselor must be careful not to probe extensively too quickly, lest he or she put the client on the defensive. Rapport must be developed before probing responses can be optimally effective.

As may be recalled, the elements of the articulated conflict are further explored and indwelt by the client in step two of the grammar. The history of these elements in the client's life may be traced and various connections among these elements may emerge which may not have been apparent to the client. New connections may be envisioned. To assist the client in this process, the counselor may respond with probing type interventions. Such interventions carry the implicit suggestion that the "client might profitably develop or discuss a point further."⁴⁷ Within the supportive conditions of the client-centered approach, any sense of the invasiveness of such counselor responses

⁴⁷ Clinebell, 94.

will be minimized. Also, if the client realizes that he or she is free to follow, or not, the implicit suggestion of the counselor here (as the client should realize if the counseling is client-centered), any sense of being coerced by the counselor will, likewise, be minimized.

In order for the counselor to suggest that the client might profit from developing a point further, he or she must have some sense of the nature of the client's situation. That is, the counselor is likely to be formulating a interpretation of the client's situation. If the counselor feels that an interpretive response will further the client's own exploration, it may certainly be offered. However, it is crucial that such interpretive responses be short, to the point and suggestive, rather than definitive. It is easy for the client to be distracted from his or her own felt sense of the situation by the counselor's interpretation, particularly when the client feels that the counselor is more knowledgeable than he or she. The counselor must assure the client that his or her felt sense is to be trusted before the counselor's interpretations. However, the counselor's interpretive remarks may open up aspects of the situation that the client may never have considered otherwise. So, the positive effect of such interventions should not be overlooked.

Finally, the counselor may advise the client in a variety of ways that may prove helpful. Again, its

helpfulness is determined by the extent to which it furthers the client's exploration of the elements of the conflict. The counselor may present new information or a new perspective to the client, or suggest a way that more information or a different perspective may be attained by the client. For example, the counselor may suggest that a visit to the client's family home may be helpful in enabling the client to further, and perhaps more accurately, understand the elements of his or her current conflict.

In the responses that are appropriate for this scanning step, the counselor's training and therapeutic/theological orientation will be more evident than at the other steps. That is to say, the way that the counselor interprets and advises the client, what aspects of the client's narrative that the counselor chooses to probe, will depend upon the counselor's theories of personality, personal experience, theology, etc. Again, in using this model the counselor must walk the fine line between active interventions that further the client's own process and those that distract the client from his or her process. The counselor is responsible for offering advice, interpretation and for probing certain areas of the client's story when the counselor feels that it may be helpful to do so, and yet he or she must do so in a way that does not impose the counselor's own agenda on the client, but allows the client's own experiencing to direct the process.

Furthermore, if the nature of the conflict was originally determined to be two dimensional, for example, it may be expanded in this step to include a four dimensional one. In tracing the significance of the elements in the client's life, one may come to realize their existential significance. For example, the grief that is experienced at the death of a loved one may be seen to contain the threat of existential meaninglessness in the face of the universal fact of death. Thus, the Void and the Holy, which had been the background, may become the primary focus of attention.

Anticipating the discussion to follow, such a shift does not change the basic mode of counselor responding (i.e., client-centered), nor does it change the types of interventions that are appropriate for each step. It will, however, affect the shape and content of each. That is, in four dimensions, the focus remains on the client's experiencing, but that focus includes the client's experiencing of the existential Void and the grace of the Holy. The types of interventions that are appropriate for a given step remain indexed to the character of that step even though the content, as determined by the dimensionality, will change. To repeat an illustration, an understanding response in step one with a two dimensional focus on the loss of a loved one might be, "You certainly seem to miss your father." With a four dimensional focus, an understanding response might be, "The ultimacy of death

makes you wonder if anything is worth it."

A final word about this step is that it seems that referrals are best suggested at this step of the grammar. As the process proceeds to, and through this step, it will become clearer to the counselor whether or not he or she is equipped to facilitate the client in the given situation. If not, referral is, of course, indicated.

Since step three is exclusively the client's work, there are no interventions to recommend here. Hopefully, what has been done in the previous steps has prepared the client for this leap in which the elements that compose the conflict are re-integrated into a new whole.

Step four is the step of release and transcendence that follows the creative insight of step three. Here the counselor aims at furthering the sense of release by supportive and understanding type responses. Understanding responses are particularly helpful considering the fact that internal connections beyond those having to do with the specific conflict might emerge in the trail of the creative insight. Probing responses that help solidify and expand these connections might also be helpful.

In this regard, this step may begin to resemble step two. One may begin the process of further exploring the connections that emerge within the range of the creative insight. In this case, interpretive responses may, likewise, be appropriate. And, as in step two, a two

dimensional resolution may be seen to have implications for four dimensions.

In the final step of interpretation or verification, interpretive or evaluative responses may be particularly helpful. Evaluative responses would be primarily those that evaluate the resolution in terms of the conflict. That is, the counselor needs to help the client to be honest in discerning whether or not the resolution is of the conflict as articulated; it is possible that the resolution is imaginary; that is, it may distort the nature of the elements involved in some way and not be a true integration of these elements. Interpretive and evaluative or confrontive responses may be most helpful in this regard.

Illustration of Types of Responses

The following is a condensation of a counseling event. It is divided according to the steps of the grammar, and the counselor responses are labeled according to the types of interventions mentioned above which best fits them.

Mary is a twenty-five year old white, middle-class female. She is married and has no children. She is an active member of a Presbyterian Church located in a large U. S. city. She is the moderator of the deacon board, which is a group of fifteen people who are set apart to help care for the various material and spiritual needs of the congregation. Mary made an appointment to meet with her pastor, Joyce, whom she has known and worked with for over

one year. Mary presented herself as being frustrated with the deacons.

Step 1

Pastor Joyce: You say that you are feeling frustrated with the deacons. (U) I know that you work hard at it and that it's a tough job. (S)

Mary: Well, I take it seriously. And I do try to make it work.

Pastor Joyce: I feel that you do a good job (S), but you feel frustrated. (U)

Mary: Thanks. Yes, I do.

Pastor Joyce: Could you take a minute now and feel that frustration? Feel what it is? (P)

Mary: Yeah, I guess so. (silence)

Pastor Joyce: Can you tell what it is that specifically frustrates you? (P)

Mary: Yes; it's that we're not doing enough.

Pastor Joyce: So, your sense of frustration has to do with the way you see the deacons performance; that they aren't doing enough, right? (U)

Mary: Yeah.

Pastor Joyce: I wonder if you might feel some responsibility for that. (P)

Mary: (Pause) Yeah, I guess I do.

Pastor Joyce: You think you do, but you're not sure? (U) (P)

Mary: Yeah, I do.

Pastor Joyce: So, you not only feel frustrated by what you see as a less than satisfactory performance, but also you feel responsible in some way. (U) Guilty, too? (P)

Mary: No, not so guilty, just responsible and frustrated.

Pastor Joyce: I see. Its frustration and responsibility. (U) So, its fair to say that you have a goal or ideal, I guess you'd call it, for the deacons and they're not meeting it. (U)

Mary: Yes, that's right.

Step 1 and Step 2 Transition

Pastor Joyce: What have you thought about doing about that? (P)

Mary: I've thought about quitting.

Pastor Joyce: One of your options is to resign as

moderator. (U)
 Mary: Yeah.
 Pastor Joyce: Is that what you want to do? (P)
 Mary: No, not really. I want to fill out my turn.
 Pastor Joyce: So, your option of quitting is not really what you want, but you're not sure what else to do about the frustration. Is that right? (U)
 Mary: Yeah. I want to finish, but I don't want to be so frustrated about it.

Step 2

Pastor Joyce: You know, it seems that this kind of thing, this frustration, is built into ministry. (I) I remember someone telling me about fund raising: that they always figure on getting 10% less than what's pledged. (I)
 Mary: What do you mean?
 Pastor Joyce: I guess what I mean is that this kind of gap, you might call it, between our vision and our performance is pretty common; to be expected, almost. (I) And that whenever our performance doesn't meet our vision, or our standards, then we need to either improve our performance or relax our standards. (A, I) Or live with the frustration. (A, I)
 Mary: Are you saying that my standards are too high?
 Pastor Joyce: I'm saying that they might be. (A, I) My experience has been that most of the time we can see further than we can do. There's nearly always that gap. (I)
 Mary: I'll need to think about that.
 Pastor Joyce: You're not sure how that sets with you? (U)
 Mary: Yeah. I'll just need to think about it.

Report of Step 3 Later That Same Week

Mary: You know I've been thinking about what you said before, and although I'm not going to lower my standards, I've realized that I can keep them and still appreciate what the deacons are doing.
 Pastor Joyce: Sounds like you've reached some kind of resolution about it, a way to have your standards without so much frustration about where the deacons are. (U) How do

you feel about it? (P)

Step 4

Mary: Actually, there's a joy to it that's hard to explain.
 Pastor Joyce: Partly relief, maybe? (U) (P)
 Mary: Sort of freer, but really a happiness.
 Pastor Joyce: Some relief in terms of feeling free, but more than that. (U)
 Mary: Yeah. I can really appreciate and feel good about what we're doing and keep my standards at the same time.

Step 5

Pastor Joyce: You can't really name it, but there's something important and good there for you. (U) It sounds like it really makes a difference with your frustration with the deacons. (U)
 Mary: Yeah, quite a bit [of difference], really.
 Pastor Joyce: A good difference? (U)
 Mary: Yeah. I feel good about it.
 Pastor Joyce: That's great! (E)
 Mary: Well, thanks for listening. It really seemed to help. See you later.
 Pastor Joyce: You're welcome.

As one can see from this pastoral event, the steps of the grammar tend to flow into one another. Note particularly the transition phase between step one and two. The conflict was being further articulated as the elements in it were being further differentiated.

The insight itself occurred outside the counseling situation, as was the case with Christina, again suggesting that the origin of the insight is the client's own creative capacities. The precise nature of the insight is not spelled out in the counseling conversation, but generally speaking, it was the simple realization that accepting

people where they are does not necessarily entail the rejection of one's own standards. This seems to have been a new arrangement of these two elements (ideas) for Mary. Previously, they were held to be mutually exclusive. One could say that prior to the insight these two elements were arranged under the principle of either/or. The insight, then, would be the reorganization of them under the new principle of both/and.

Mary came back some time later for a follow up visit, only this time the situation was more four dimensional. In this visit one will be able to see the way that the two dimensional themes of this visit are prototypical of a four dimensional conflict. This visit will be explored, in combination with another pastoral event, after a short discussion about the effect of dimensionality on the counseling approach.

Adjustments of Method Based Upon Dimensionality

Having presented a general client-centered method for facilitating movement through the grammar and specifying the types of interventions that are appropriate for a given step in the grammar, it is now time to look more closely at how dimensionality affects facilitation of movement through the grammar. Briefly, the general client-centered approach remains the same, but must be revised to correspond to the implications contained in the added dimensions of Void and Holy. Likewise, the types of appropriate interventions

remain indexed to the steps of the grammar, but the particular content of these types of interventions must, of course, be adjusted to fit the dimensions of the situation. A final dynamic is that of the movement through the grammar toward an explicit knowledge of Christ. That is, in the early steps of the grammar, the client may be responding to the initiative of Christ without recognizing that initiative as being Christ's. However, the third step of the grammar in four dimensions is precisely that of recognizing Christ as the resolution to one's existential conflict. Transformation in four dimensions is a coming to know, recognize, Christ. This dynamic must be considered in facilitating the grammar in four dimensions.

To begin this discussion, one should note the theological deficiency of Rogers' position vis-a-vis Loder. Briefly put, Rogers lacks an understanding of the depth and significance of the Void. Roger's anthropology is too optimistic. This leads Rogers into the error (or, perhaps stems from the error) of assuming that the creative potential of the client is sufficient for whatever conflict that he/she may encounter. Clearly, from the description of the Void that has been given above, this position is not adequate.

This deficiency in Roger's anthropology should not lead one into the error of abandoning his method altogether when it comes to four dimensional experiences, however. Indeed,

as has been insisted, it retains its relevancy; but, it must be transformed. That is, it must be adapted to meet the peculiar requirements of four dimensional transformation.

There is an analogy between the method for facilitating two and four dimensional transformation. The similarity is that the necessary conditions of unconditional positive regard, congruence and empathetic understanding are the same in both cases. These conditions facilitate the client's experiencing, which is the aim of the client-centered approach. Likewise, everything that was said when discussing Gendlin's ideas of focusing and client-centered responding as baseline applies to both two and four dimensional experience, as does the types of interventions that are appropriate for the steps of the grammar.

The main difference between the facilitation of two and four dimensional transformation lies in that upon which the counselor enables the client to focus, and the actual content of the responses, of course. In four dimensional transformation, the counselor helps the client to focus on the felt sense of the Void and/or the spiritual presence of Christ as one moves through the steps of the grammar. Since the grammar of transformation in four dimensions proceeds through the initiative of Christ, facilitating that movement means facilitating awareness of and response to that initiative.

However, that initiative need not always and in every

step be identified as Christ's. Recall from both the Emmaus story, and that of Tim, that Christ was actively directing the movement through the grammar even though he was not recognized as such. In both cases, those involved were responding to Christ even though they did not realize that the one that they were responding to was Christ. They had the experience of Christ without identifying that experience as Christ. The point is that attending to and responding to the initiative of Christ does not necessarily mean articulating that initiative as Christ's at every step of the way.

This is particularly true of the first two steps of the grammar. What is important in the conflict and scanning phases is that the nature or direction of that initiative be appropriately recognized. That is, the full depth of the conflict and its various connections within one's life need to be adequately articulated. The Void must be indwelt and its felt sense differentiated in appropriate images, concepts, etc. In the scanning phase the client needs to focus on the implicit connections between the conflict as articulated and the prototypes, memories, implications, etc. that he/she seems to be relevant. To do otherwise is to impede transformation in all four dimensions. It is not necessary, at this point, to name Christ as the motivating presence behind these movements; although, when one comes to the third step, the transformative intuition of Christ,

naming that presence as Christ becomes more significant.

It may be important to recognize the temptation that counseling pastors may face in this regard: that is, to articulate the conflict in less than its full depth. The reason that a counselor may be thus tempted is the common one that he or she, too, is powerless in the face of the Void. The counselor is as powerless in the face of the Void as is the client whom he/she is trying to help. At this point in the therapeutic relationship one comes as close as is possible in that context to a relationship of equals. The Void clearly has a leveling effect. As the evangelical expression says it, "The ground at the foot of the cross is always level." That is precisely where both the counselor and the therapist are. It takes faith to go there with another (not to mention love); that is, to provide companionship as the other indwells and articulates the full extent of his/her existential condition of separation from the ground of his/her being. This is what the method requires.

Even though the counselor cannot solve the existential dilemma for the client, and in fact is subject to the same dilemma, he/she can, nevertheless, be of help to the client. The counselor can be a companion and provide the rapport that may prevent the conflict from overwhelming the client. The counselor's companionship may provide the support that the client needs to engage the Void and to endure the

process of its resolution.

Beyond this companionship and accepting environment created by the counselor's attitudes toward the client, the counselor may help the client to focus upon the felt sense of his/her situation as he/she moves through the steps of the grammar. As has been made clear, focusing here means attending to the felt sense of the existential or spiritual condition. This may require considerable persistence on the counselor's part (as well as the client's) due to the overwhelming nature of the Void, as well as of the Holy, and one's natural resistance to confronting either. Nevertheless, gentle persistence in helping the client to attend to the felt sense of the conflict in a comprehensive, four dimensional sense prepares the client for the resolution of coming to know Christ in precisely these four dimensional terms.

Furthermore, one should recall Gendlin's ideas about the client-centered approach, i.e., empathetic responding to the client's articulation of the felt sense as being baseline. The counselor may intervene in a number of ways beyond reflective listening, or mirroring, as long as, and only as long as, he/she returns to the current experiencing of the client. The counselor may choose to intervene in ways that are designed to further the client's experiencing beyond that of reflecting the client's current experiencing. However, as was noted above, such interventions must not

violate the client's movement by going so far beyond where the client is at the moment that it causes confusion or resistance, and they must correspond to the character of the step of the grammar with which the client is dealing.

With respect to this latter point, it needs to be repeated that the types of responses that are appropriate for a given step of the grammar remain the same in facilitating both two and four dimensional transformation. The content changes, of course, to fit the dimensionality of the situation, but the types of responses remain indexed to the steps of the grammar.

The way that the increasing explicitness of Christ intersects with appropriate interventions for a given step in the grammar may be suggested as follows. In step two, for example, the counselor may begin to suggest that a resolution to the existential crises may be found in Christ. Such an advising or interpretive type of response may take the particular form of proclamation (witness) or prayer, for example. Such an intervention would not only be appropriate to that particular step of the grammar and the dimensionality of the conflict, but it would also be in line with the general movement of the grammar in four dimensions, which is toward a more explicit knowledge of Christ as the transformer of one's existence as a whole, that is, as the resolution to one's existential conflict.

It needs to be stressed that precisely how Christ may

be the resolution for a given client is not for the counselor to decide. That is between the client and Christ. The counselor may help open the client to that experience, but the counselor cannot write the script for it.

Furthermore, by introducing Christ in this way (proclamation or prayer), the counselor is adding to the elements in the client's situation rather than devising a resolution. The counselor can introduce Christ as an element, but cannot make Christ known as the resolution to the existential dilemma of another person. Only as Christ moves (at his own initiative) from being one of the elements in the situation to being the reconciling power and principle among them does he become known as the resolution. In other words, presenting Christ in prayer or proclamation, for example, should not be misunderstood to be the transforming intuition of Christ. The point is that the interventions of prayer or proclamation may, when indicated, open the client to, or prepare the client for, that actual transforming moment by presenting it as a possibility.

It needs to be made clear that prayer and proclamation are instances of interpretive or advising type of responses and, as such, may be particularly appropriate in step two of the grammar in four dimensions. These are theological interventions which correspond to the step of the grammar and the dimensionality of the situation. They are appropriate in the same way that similar psychotherapeutic

interventions are in two dimensions. The two dimensional analogue to proclamation, for example, might be a brief account of the counselor's experience growing up in an alcoholic family, or the information that children of alcoholics have difficulty recognizing their true feelings. Such examples of counselor input are indexed to the step of the grammar (in this case, the scanning step), the dimensionality of the situation and the overriding intent to facilitate the client's unique experience.

As an example of what is intended here, a personal witness might be something along the lines of briefly and simply articulating what the counselor has found to be true of Christ within his/her own life. Or, as a representative of the church, the pastor might quote a line from scripture or from a Christian writer that might help the client to articulate the felt sense of his/her situation. For example, a conflict may be appropriately articulated further for a client by referring to the words of St. Paul: "The good I would, I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:15, RSV). Such scriptural witness has the advantage of not only helping to articulate the felt sense of the conflict, but also of pointing to (and articulating) the source of resolution. This corresponds to Loder's comment about the evocative character of theological symbols. This also seems to correspond to the point that is made by C. Daniel Batson and W. Larry Ventis when they

discuss how religious language might facilitate religious experience.

[W]e would suggest that these religious symbols contain in kernalized form an expression both of the existential question that provoked the creative religious experience and the new vision that allows the experienter to see this question in a new way.⁴⁸

Such a use of religious language is an attempt to further the client's experiencing. It is an attempt, as Rogers would say, of helping the client "to dip into the pool of implicit meanings." It is an attempt to help the client to verbalize and more fully experience the felt meaning of his/her situation.

Regarding the use of prayer, the pastor must, of course, be sensitive to the client's needs and beliefs. If prayer is used, it should be more evocative than prescriptive; that is, it should have the character of offering to Christ the situation as it has been articulated in the counseling conversation. The counselor should not add to the understanding of the situation that is held in common with the client. That is, the counselor should not offer a prayer in which he or she interprets the situation differently from the way that has been accepted within the counseling conversation. Rather, the situation as articulated is presented as is to Christ with the prayer that Christ accept and transform it for, and in, the client

⁴⁸ Batson and Ventis, 127.

in ways that are appropriate to the nature of Christ and the unique person and situation of the client.

Moving on to the following steps of the grammar, the general client-centered approach for facilitating the third and fourth steps in four dimensions has much in common with the method and goal of spiritual direction as advocated by William Barry and William Connolly. It might be helpful, then, to look at their ideas briefly.⁴⁹

For Barry and Connolly, the aim of spiritual direction is two fold: "First, helping the directee pay attention to God as he reveals himself; second, helping the directee recognize his reactions and decide on his responses to God."⁵⁰ The first aspect corresponds to the third step in the grammar; the second corresponds to the following step.

The first task is paying attention to God. This involves the activity that has been described as focusing on the felt sense of one's situation, where the primary awareness is the sense of God's presence. Barry and Connolly do not use the phrase "felt sense," but they are describing essentially the same dynamic that has been included under that name. For example, they say,

⁴⁹ William A. Barry and William J. Connolly, The Practice of Spiritual Direction (New York: Seabury Press, 1982), 46.

⁵⁰ Barry and Connolly, 46.

The focus of direction is on the Lord and the way he seems to relate to each person....⁵¹

For spiritual direction, if it performs its proper task, must help people to recognize and focus their lives as response to God's loving, creative and saving action.⁵²

Their [spiritual directors] task is to help people experience God's action and respond to him. Fostering discovery rather than teaching is their purpose.⁵³

The director must keep his basic purpose in mind encouraging the directee to notice inner facts.⁵⁴

Such quotations could be expanded, but these are enough to make the point: spiritual direction, as Barry and Connolly understand it, is intended to enable the directee to focus upon, recognize and respond to the presence and activity of God in his/her life. In their description of spiritual direction as attending to the felt presence of God in one's life, they are essentially describing what might be called an instance of client-centered spiritual direction. That is, the client's experiencing of God is the primary datum of spiritual direction, an experiencing which the director is there to facilitate and enhance. The spiritual direction is centered in the directee's experiencing of God as in client-centered therapy the focus is on the client's

⁵¹ Barry and Connolly, 44.

⁵² Barry and Connolly, 44.

⁵³ Barry and Connolly, 43.

⁵⁴ Barry and Connolly, 69.

felt sense of a given two dimensional situation.

In addition, Barry and Connolly point out that people often come for spiritual direction as a consequence of what has been called existential conflict.

And they [candidates for spiritual direction] have strong desires for something more in their relationship with God. These desires may come from a sense of emptiness in spite of success in work or in raising a family, a sense of something lacking that often seems to come to people after thirty-five. They may come because of the cultural and social malaise.... Life crises may disturb the equilibrium of some and force them to ask about the quality of their lives with God. The death of a parent or spouse or close friend, for example, or the onset of a severe illness or a change of job or of community--such crises can occasion a new look at one's relationship with God and lead to a desire for something more.⁵⁵

This is clearly a list of that which would fit under the rubric of the Void. Barry and Connolly are saying that people seek God as a result of an encounter with the Void, in any one of its many presentations. The task of spiritual direction is to help them find God within their own experience, and this is, of course, the aim of pastoral counseling as it is understood here, as it functions with regard to four dimensional conflicts. However, this dissertation emphasizes in a way that Barry and Connolly do not that one's felt sense of God is articulated in terms of the resolution to one's existential conflict. The conflicted existential situation is the context in which God is revealed and known in an existentially meaningful way to

⁵⁵ Barry and Connolly, 37.

the individual.

The second task that Barry and Connolly name corresponds roughly to the fourth step of the grammar. That step, it will be recalled, is the release of energy bound up with the conflict, and of the self from the entrapment in the conflict, and the concomitant transcendence of this self vis-a-vis the conflict. The self is free to choose for or against the new possibility presented in the encounter with the Holy. This choosing for or against one's liberation and liberator is an instance of the second task that Barry and Connolly name: to "recognize his reactions and decide on his responses to God." Again, the procedure is the same for facilitating this task. Through the work of empathetic understanding, the counselor helps the client to focus on the latter's immediate reaction and intentional response to the resolution as presented in the encounter with the Holy. One should note the distinction between an immediate reaction and an intentional response. The former may include joy, fear, amazement, wonder, etc. The latter would include such things as deciding to be baptized, joining the church, changing churches, seeking therapy, making restitution, etc. The point is that one has an immediate reaction to the encounter and one has a further, more intentional response to make in regard to the implications of the encounter. The latter leads into the final step.

The pastoral counselor helps the client to articulate

how it is that this particular presentation of the Holy addresses the conflict as articulated. Again, the pastoral counselor does not supply the "correct" answer; although in keeping with the method, she may suggest theological symbols that may be relevant. Rather, the counselor helps the client hold together the resolution and the conflict in a way that enables the client to make the imaginative connections between the two, helping the client to formulate publicly understandable expressions of the meaning of the resolution vis-a-vis the conflict. The counselor does this by, again, helping the client to focus on the felt sense of the resolution, allowing the imagination of the client to make the appropriate connections between this felt sense and images that are intelligible to a public.

One sees again how the imagination is integral to the whole process, and particularly as it returns on the far side of four dimensional transformation. The imagination is the mediating activity between the Holy and its expression in two dimensional reality. The imagination not only presents the Holy to consciousness as it images the felt sense of the Holy, it also procures possibilities for expressing the meaning of the Holy in the various aspects of life. The imagination translates the significance of the Holy into two dimensional language. The imagination attempts to mediate the meaning of the Holy to the various occurrences in two dimensional life, so that one's response

to such occurrences corresponds not only to the nature of this particular occurrence, but also to the intention of the Holy. This is essentially what Loder means when he talks about composing one's lived world in response to the redeemed world that God is composing. One discerns the intention of God, which is a distinct step. One also discerns the nature of the elements in one's world and their possible arrangement, which is another distinct step. Finally, one discerns the meaning of the Holy vis-a-vis these elements, arriving at a composition that reflects the nature both of these elements and of the Holy.

Mention is made of this dynamic here because it illustrates the continuing importance of the imagination as it operates within four dimensional existence. Also, this process could be seen as being part of the final step in the grammar wherein the meaning of the Holy is expressed in public terms as its implications extend, via the imagination, beyond the specific conflict that it has resolved.

In recognizing the similarities between Barry and Connolly's ideas of spiritual direction and the general approach to facilitating the movement through the grammar, the value of the specific types of interventions as appropriate for a given step in the grammar should not be overlooked. To repeat those types here may be helpful. In step one, understanding and supportive responses are key,

although one may begin probing responses in this step to help clarify the nature of the conflict; in step two, interpretive, advising and probing responses may be particularly helpful; in step four, understanding and supportive responses should, again, predominate, while probing may also be appropriate (as in step two) for clarification; in the final step of interpretation or verification, interpretive and evaluative responses may be particularly appropriate. As was illustrated in the discussion of prayer and proclamation, each of these types of responses must take on a character, shape and content which corresponds to the dimensionality of the client's situation.

The following is a condensation and composite of two pastoral events involving two clients. These events are combined here because together they illuminate important aspects of four dimensional transformation. One of the persons involved is Mary, whose first visit to her pastor was discussed above. Her name will be used to represent both clients.

Mary makes an appointment with Pastor Joyce after Joyce preached a sermon in which Martin Luther's conversion experience was used as an illustration of the experience of grace.

Mary:	I really appreciated your sermon last Sunday.
Pastor Joyce:	Thank you. Was there anything particular about it that you liked?

Mary: Yeah. What you said about Martin Luther. That part about him never being able to do enough. You know, about trying so hard to be a good enough monk, but never knowing if he was.

Pastor Joyce: That was a crucial part of his life. What was it that impressed you about that?

Mary: I really identified with it. I feel that way.

Pastor Joyce: There was a lot about what I said about Luther that fit your experience?

Mary: Yeah.

Pastor Joyce: What specifically?

Mary: Well, I realized that that was how I was with God. I never thought of it before, but that's the way I am. I mean, I'm that way, period. I realized that I'm that way with God.

Pastor Joyce: You realized that you were like Luther in some ways, particularly with God. Can you name that way? How are you with God?

Mary: I guess its that I try so hard to be good, to be good enough. To do enough. You know.

Pastor Joyce: You feel that its important to be good enough, to be good enough for God. So that what? What would happen if you were good enough?

Mary: (pause) God would love me, and hold me, sorta, and it would be okay. I would be okay. But okay is too weak. I don't know.

Pastor Joyce: God loving you is important to you. But its hard to explain; its like God holding you, and you being okay, but okay isn't quite it; its more than okay.

Mary: Yeah. Just loved all the way through.

Pastor Joyce: All of you loved. Just as you are, sorta?

Mary: Yeah. That's what I wanted, but I didn't know it until the other day.

Pastor Joyce: What day?

Mary: Sunday, and your sermon. Something happened as I was listening. Its hard to describe, except I did feel loved by God.

Pastor Joyce: This was a new experience for you?

Mary: Yeah. I mean, I've always believed, or thought I did. Its just that I've never experienced God's love like that. Like you said, God loves me right now as I am. I don't have to be good enough. Listening to you explain what happened to Luther, I could almost feel it happening to me.

Like I knew what he must have felt.
 Pastor Joyce: Well, that must have been a powerful, important experience for you.
 Mary: Yeah. And it seems that since then things seem different. The scripture seems alive somehow, the worship is different, more alive. I don't know how to describe it.
 Pastor Joyce: I understand that it's hard to articulate, and that it is very real to you and that it makes a big difference in a lot of things, like scripture and worship.
 Mary: Yes, its very real and very important. Anyway, I wanted you to know that I really appreciate your sermon.

Not long after this conversation, Mary returned to tell her pastor that she has been laid off at her work. She is not worried about the income, instead she is wondering about what direction to move in her life.

Mary: It seems like a chance for me to look at doing something else.
 Pastor Joyce: Something else. What do you mean?
 Mary: Like something in the church. Not a pastor or anything like that, but something that has to do with the church.
 Pastor Joyce: So, you're interested in being more involved in the church, maybe as a career, or something? And you see your lay off as a chance to test this? Is that right?
 Mary: Yeah.
 Pastor Joyce: I'm wondering if this has anything to do with the experience that you told me about before, you know when you said that things, scripture and church, seemed to come alive for you.
 Mary: Yeah, I think it does. Its connected, I'm not sure how. I want it to continue, or I want to do something with it, I don't want it to be lost.
 Pastor Joyce: You want it to make a difference in your life, what you do with your life, you want it to be a part of, maybe even direct, your life; something like that? Not something that happened and gets forgotten.
 Mary: Yeah. That's real important to me.

Rather than present a categorization of pastoral

responses in these conversations, some important factors in it will be highlighted. These conversations show that the grammar is valuable for pastoral care as well as pastoral counseling. Pastoral care may be defined as the less structured, more general acts of care that are a pastor's vocation, rather than the more focused, often contractual, form of that care which is pastoral counseling. Although pastoral care and proclamation are not identical, of course, proclamation does have its pastoral care aspect. Mary's case is an illustration of that aspect.

When proclamation was mentioned previously, what was meant was the conveying of the Christian message within the context of the counseling session. Such an intervention was said to be particularly appropriate within the scanning step of the grammar and could be categorized as an interpretive or advising type of intervention. The same is true in this case, except that the proclamation occurred within the context of the liturgy. That is, in Mary's case, this preaching event served as an interpretive intervention that intersected with her process at the scanning step of the grammar and helped her to integrate her life experience into a new whole in terms of her relationship with God.

What is true here concerning proclamation is likewise true for various other acts of ministry within the parish that fall under the rubric of pastoral care, or at least have a pastoral care aspect to them. These acts may be

interpreted in terms of the grammar of transformation as various interventions within the steps of the grammar. The pastoral prayer, for example, that is a part of many Protestant liturgies, presents an opportunity for the pastor, as liturgist, to intervene in the life of the congregation in a way that is similar to the way he or she would intervene as pastoral counselor, in the situation of an individual.

Returning to this particular incident, it seems clear that Pastor Joyce's sermon could be viewed as an interpretive intervention in four dimensions for Mary, which helped Mary to compose a new meaning to her existence as a whole in response to the Spirit. This is an example of the dialectic that was first discussed in the second chapter between the imagination and faith, or the Spirit. The preaching about Martin Luther's struggle resonated in Mary so that she could imaginatively identify with him in his conflict. Because of this imaginative identification with Luther in his existential conflict, Mary was able to hear Luther's resolution as representing her own as well; that is, she could imaginatively identify with Luther's resolution, and that opened her to the transforming presence of the Spirit in her life. Thus, the pastor's sermon was a pastoral intervention that helped prepare Mary for the third step of the grammar in four dimensions: the intuitive vision of Christ.

It was at this point that Mary returned to speak with her pastor. According to the theory of the grammar as a whole, Mary could have moved from this step either forward toward interpretation or backward toward articulating the conflict. She principally seems to have moved forward; however, interpretation meant articulating the resolution in terms of the conflict, and for Mary that meant articulating the conflict for the first time. So in the process of interpreting the resolution (step 5), Mary was also articulating the conflict (step 1).

One might notice that she first speaks of the conflict that this event addressed, namely, her drive to be good enough and never being sure if she was or not. One might further notice that this drive, and this conflict, were also implicit in her complaint about the deacons that was mentioned earlier. Then she was concerned about the deacons not doing enough and her responsibility in that. Furthermore, it is probable that the resolution to that conflict prepared her for the resolution that addressed this similar conflict in existential depth. The conflict and the resolution of the deacon situation was prototypical of this conflict and resolution in four dimensions.

Mary also discussed the implication of the resolution in terms of her life situation when she again returned to see her pastor after being laid off from her job. This could also be understood as part of the interpretation step,

in this case not an interpretation in terms of the conflict so much as an interpretation in terms of the various two dimensional elements and opportunities of her life.

Furthermore, as has been pointed out previously, convictional experiences, or four dimensional transformations, often draw a person into the grammar at the middle step. One often consciously enters the process with the intuitive vision of Christ and then moves to complete the remaining steps of it. This was the case with Mary.

In addition, the steps of four dimensional transformation are often significantly separated in time, and they may be repeated. That is to say, Mary may take some considerable time in recognizing and articulating the implications of the conflict that her experience of grace addressed. Likewise, working out the implications of it in her life situation is an ongoing process. Both these movements, backward to the conflict and forward to interpretation, may be repeated periodically as her life situation changes. She may have discovered that Christ is the answer to her existential question, but the precise nature of that question may change as she moves through life, and consequently, how Christ is the answer, and what that means for her life situation, will need to be readdressed accordingly.

As with the previous illustration, so here, one can see that the grammar of transformation is a dynamic and fluid

structure. Nevertheless, it is recognizable within a variety of contexts, and can provide valuable guidance to a counseling pastor in both diagnosing a parishioner's situation and for helping the parishioner to move toward resolution, growth and salvation.

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